THE COMMONWEAL

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THE BIRTH CONTROL REVOLUTION

THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, in discussing the manifesto giving moral approval to artificial birth control issued by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, speaks of the "almost revolutionary significance" of the Federal Council's action. We think there is no question of its being "almost" revolutionary—on the contrary, we believe the revolutionary significance of this event goes far beyond the birth control controversy. It may come to be recognized as the liquidation of historic Protestantism by its own trustees; the voluntary bankruptcy of the Reformation. If the theses nailed by Luther to the church door at Wittenberg three centuries ago marked the birth of the Reformation, the theses of the Federal Council, when considered in connection with the similar approvals of contraception by the Anglican bishops at Lambeth, and by the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Unitarians in this country, may mark the death of the Reformation.

Much depends upon the question of how far and to what extent the Federal Council is really representative of the leadership and membership of American Protestantism. So far as concerns the fields of social action, and the general coöperation of the Protestant churches in such movements as the support of prohibition, international peace, economic problems, and similar humanitarian measures, many of them most commendable and practically useful, it is clear that the Federal Council achieves for American Protestantism an effective and well-organized unity. Generally speaking, however, we suppose it is fair to say that the leadership of this united action is almost exclusively in the hands of the "liberal" element in Protestantism—using the word liberal in its theological connotation rather than in its political or social meaning.

Millions of American Protestants who are ardent workers for social reform, and who willingly go along with their liberal brethren in that field, are nevertheless stanch believers in the historic and traditional principles of supernatural Christianity. A spokesman for the great Lutheran Church has already disavowed the action of the Federal Council. Probably other orthodox Protestant denominations will be equally opposed to the dogmas of the dissolution of Christian morality which are implicit in the declarations of the Federal Council. It is equally certain that millions of individual Protestant Christians, belonging to many denominations, including those represented in the Fed-

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eral Council, will also deny and repudiate them, and will fight against their being accepted as that "Protestant view" which the Federal Council explicitly declares them to be. No one can as yet safely prophesy what the result of this conflict within Protestantism will be; but it is likely that the struggle of the orthodox will be futile; that at best they will only be able to maintain a failing rear-guard action as they retreat to dig themselves in for their last battle; which they must fight as isolated groups.

Apparently, the main body of modern American Protestantism has surrendered unconditionally to secularism. If the Federal Council correctly interprets "the corporate conscience," to use their own phrase, of the majority of American Protestants, it has really done more than merely surrender the historic morality of Protestantism—it has joined the massed enemies of orthodox Christianity, and now fights with them. Certainly, if this view be correct, Protestantism has been consistent to the end. It came into organized existence as a revolt against the doctrine of authority in religion. It dissolves into secularism in the same fashion. Private judgment in religion thus completes its fatal cycle.

No one in the United States (so we hold) ever spoke with more revealing clarity on the subject of Protestant Christianity than Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulist Fathers, the pioneer American Catholic religious order, or congregation. Hecker and the foremost of his apostolic companions were converts from Protestantism. All were thoroughly familiar with the Protestant atmosphere and mentality. Than Isaac Hecker, nobody could or did speak with more sympathy and appreciation of the many splendid virtues, and the many truths, even if but partial and unharmonized truths, possessed by historic Protestantism and still possessed by those groups and individuals who have retained their faith in the supernatural and divinely revealed character of Christianity. And nobody ever saw more clearly the fundamental error of Protestantism than Father Hecker. In that great and stirring book (which ought to be much more widely known than it is), "The Church and the Age," he says: "One of the chief features of the Church for these last three centuries has been its conflict with the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, properly called Protestantism. The nature of Protestantism may be defined as the exaggerated development of personal independence, directed to the negation of the divine authority of the Church."

If Hecker were alive today, he would be witnessing the end of this exaggerated personal independence in the field of Christian religion. It has reached its term: which is its own destruction. The denial of the divine authority of revealed religious truth is now absolute: for it carries the deniers outside the boundaries of historic Christianity. Liberal Protestantism is really (so it seems to us, and we speak with all respect for the noble solicitude it displays for human welfare, its passion for the building up of a better order of society) a new religion, but it is no longer Protestantism—it is pagan humanitarianism, it is the creed of social service, built on the shifting and unstable experiments, but not on the demonstrated facts, of materialistic science.

Let us look at the birth control report as a proof of that statement. A certain number of individuals, members of a large number of various groups, all differing widely from each other in so far as definable principles are concerned, but united by a certain mood, or feeling, and strongly animated by a desire to serve the best interests of humanity, according to their own best lights, form a committee to study the question of the use of contraceptives. They do so because this question is one of great social importance, and "the public, therefore, has a right to expect guidance from the Church on the moral aspects" of that question. In other words, these individuals, with all their separate and individual views, after taking into account also the conflicting reports and opinions of other groups and individuals, become, in their own view, the Christian "Church." Finally, they take a vote—a majority assenting to one view, a very small minority (three members) dissenting from the majority opinion, and two or three others refraining from public expression of their views.

The whole committee seems, however, to have been united on two points. One we shall speak of further on; the other was that the "corporate conscience" of the "Church" should seek guidance "from the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life." Certainly all Christians would agree with this. The language devoted to the spiritual principles which the committee invokes is a sort of prose poem of vague mysticism—like organ music softly accompanying a sociological lecture, wrapping it in an atmosphere of faint, frail religiosity. But mark what follows the pantheistic hymn: "It should be expected that guidance [of the Holy Spirit] will find expression through the researches and experiences of physicians and men of science as well as through the corporate conscience of the Church."

And then, having sought such spiritual guidance, and having deliberated with the utmost conscientiousness, the committee declares by a mere majority vote that "the careful and restrained use of contraceptives by married people is valid and moral." There is no hedging; no ifs or buts or perhaps; the representatives of twenty million Protestant Christians unequivocally pronounce in favor of the morality of birth control.

And this it does in spite of the fact that the committee itself asserts that "as to the rightness of the use of contraceptives, Christian opinion is divided." Not only that, but those other channels of the Holy Spirit, the physicians and scientists, are also of a divided opinion; for the report, when speaking of the medical opinion of the country, says that "nobody knows as yet the prevailing opinion." (As a matter of fact, as THE COMMONWEAL will soon offer evidence to show, it is certain that a large number of leading gynecologists are opposed to contraceptives—not on moral grounds, perhaps, but because of the great mass of evidence

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showing that contraceptives seriously injure health and tend to produce sterility even when those who have employed them desire offspring and give up their use.)

That the "knowledge of contraceptives is also widely disseminated," as the report states, is undoubtedly true, and it is also undoubtedly true that the moral approval given to their use by the Federal Council will further disseminate this baneful knowledge among thousands of Christian homes hitherto uninfected. Still, we admit that the report does utter a warning to such families. The majority members of the committee "feel obliged to point out that present knowledge of birth control is incomplete, and that an element of uncertainty, although it is small, remains. More serious is the fact that all methods are as yet more or less subject to personal factors for their effectiveness. Married people should keep these facts in mind and welcome children, should they come." It is to be hoped that those parents-by-accident who may be influenced by the new morality will heed this pious counsel, instead of carrying the revision of morality one step further by seeking legal approval of abortion, as has been done in Russia.

However, the Federal Council does recognize certain dangerous consequences of the growth of birth control practices. It warns the public "against advertised nostrums which are beginning to appear in thinly disguised forms in reputable journals." How journals which accept such advertisements can yet be termed "reputable," we must leave to the Federal Council moralists to explain. For our part, we suppose that more or less "reputable" advertising agencies will soon be in a position to obtain "endorsements," perhaps accompanied by photographs of the endorsers, for the more reliable forms of contraceptive devices.

So far, the Federal Council has only been concerned with contraception as used by married couples—married to each other of course is meant. But what about unmarried people? The Federal Council realizes that "serious evils, such as extra-marital sex relations may be increased by a general knowledge of contraceptives." But it hastens to dispel any alarm that this remark may occasion by the optimistic assurance that it believes that "the undesirable use of contraceptives will not be indulged in by most people."

Everybody must hope that the Federal Council will be justified in its optimism. For already there are many factories turning out millions of the sort of contraceptive devices which are sold cheaply to all comers in drug stores everywhere; yet, even so, no doubt it is true that "most people" do not use them. But millions of people do use them, including boys and girls of high school age, as all social workers know only too well. Can the Federal Council suppose that its recommendation of their use to married people only will not incidentally yet inevitably increase their use by others? The traffic in illegal contraceptives, already huge, may soon rival the traffic in bootleg liquor. Who does not know that sexual immorality is flooding the world?

But we think that however revolutionary, from the point of view of orthodox Christianity, the report of the Federal Council may be, its most revolutionary aspect is expressed in the following words: "Whatever the final conclusion may be [as to the prevailing opinion of the moral rightness of contraceptives] the committee is firmly of the opinion that the Church should not seek to impose its point of view as to the use of contraceptives upon the public by legislation or any other form of coercion; and especially should not seek to prohibit physicians from imparting such information to those who in the judgment of the medical profession are entitled to receive it."

This was the second of the two points upon which the committee was unanimous. Having admitted over and over again that the medical profession and the Christian churches are sharply divided as to the morality of contraception, admitting also that the whole subject still requires unprejudiced study, and admitting that the spreading of the knowledge of contraceptives may work serious evils outside of their recommended use by married couples, nevertheless, these representatives of the majority of the Protestant churches—which firmly uphold the legislative coercion which they were chiefly instrumental in obtaining against the use of even the mildest wines—in this infinitely graver moral issue would withdraw the churches from the field, and declare that the divided opinion of the medical profession shall become the supreme and unchallengeable court of last resort. What a masterpiece of topsy-turvy logic and upside-down morality!

So does the Protestant principle of private and individual opinion finally surrender a supremely important moral problem into the hands of a clique of birth control advocates—incidentally to the huge profit of commercial interests, the makers and sellers of contraceptives. If this majority action of the Federal Council correctly expresses the "corporate conscience" of Protestantism—which we strongly hope is not the case—then its Committee on Marriage and the Home may soon be rendered useless by the total disappearance of the objects of its study among their own people, except for those separated and isolated remnants of historic Protestant Christianity that may still remain faithful to Christian morals.

But this is certain, namely, that these last will fight against this particular evil of legalized birth control not only with all the full power of Catholicism aiding them, but also with the support of leading economists, of perhaps a majority of qualified physicians, and of statesmen already alarmed by the falling birth rate of the United States, and of all sensible people who realize that legalized contraception would be a long step on the road toward state clinics for abortion, for compulsory sterilization of those declared unfit by fanatical eugenists, and the ultimate destruction of human liberty at the hands of an absolute pagan state.

Will Christian morality not oppose all this? The Catholic Church has already answered the question.

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WEEK BY WEEK

ALTHOUGH the Austro-German proposal for a custom union came rather as a surprise and with some of the aspects of a *fait accompli,* there were about it sufficient stipulations for delay to give it the character of a tentative proposal. It is really a trial balloon. It is already observable that this particular balloon will have let loose upon it winds of oratory from every point of the compass. It is our private suspicion, though at this time it can be little more than a guess, that the balloon will not be able to withstand the pressures brought to bear upon it, and will collapse. To linger for a moment longer in the realm of metaphor, it seems to us that the political weather is too unsettled for the balloon's survival now; there are too many atmospheric tensions precariously balanced. We imagine those letting it out, will reel it in again rather than disturb this balance. Specifically, the advantages to Germany of the union are simple and obvious. It would extend Germany's economic frontiers to Italy, Hungary and Jugoslavia, so that her goods could move to these countries across Austria without any intervening tariff barrier, and it would open all of Austria to her as a market in which no other countries could successfully compete. Reciprocal advantages are outlined for Austria, but they are not so simple. It is hardly doubtful that Austrian industry would not be able to hold its own against the extremely efficient industrial machine of Germany. This does not imply that Germany would seek to impoverish Austria, but inevitably it would dominate Austria. Aside from the differences in capital resources which are too complicated to be estimated on a basis that would permit comparison, Germany is almost five times greater than Austria in area and nine times greater in population. Prussia alone has over three times the area of Austria and five times the population. Throw into these unequal balances the hard-headed and practical characteristics of the German people compared to the light-opera temperament of the Austrians, and it is readily observable that Austria would soon be economically a vassal state of Germany, whatever political forms it might be permitted to preserve for show.

Economic Pan-Germany

THE FORCE immediately opposed to Germany's interest in this plan, is of course, France. Other smaller states, allies of France, are equally opposed to it, but for the purpose of simplification we may consider France as the unit of opposition. France is prompted by obvious reasons of self-interest, and also by a subtler reason of political theory. England no doubt shares the same apprehensions, but has indicated that it will not openly involve itself in the opposition as it has little doubt that the plan will fail to surmount the treaty obstacles in the way. By the treaty of St. Germain, Austria agreed to abstain, except with the consent of the League of Nations, "from any act of such a nature as would directly or indirectly compromise her independence." This agreement Austria reaffirmed in a protocol signed in 1922 when she obtained an enormous loan through the League, and added specifically: "It [Austria] will abstain from any negotiation and from any economic or financial engagement which might be of such a nature as to compromise this independence directly or indirectly . . . it being understood that she will not limit her economic independence by granting to any state any special régime or exclusive advantages of such a nature as would menace this independence." These words would seem to be sufficiently clear, and are reënforced by the fact that Austria has spent over $100,000,000 of the loan that occasioned them. This is a capital interest in her affairs by non-German people that she cannot easily repudiate. The political theory that is opposed to the union, is the Pan-Europe plan sponsored by Mr. Briand. Though the German foreign office cleverly suggested that the union was simply a practical beginning on the plan for a United States of Europe, the soul of this plan without which it is a meaningless thing is that the federation shall be inclusive of all the states of Europe, and shall not be an alliance of one part against another. This is difficult and will take time. In the midst of these difficulties, we believe that the Austro-German alliance will be decided not on a choice between the purity or practicalness of French as compared to German motives, or vice versa, but on Austria's clearly stated contract not to do this very thing, in consideration for which she enjoyed substantial values rendered.

IN NEW YORK CITY, April 6 and 7, there will be held the fifth annual meeting of the Catholic Association for International Peace. The International Ethics Committee, of which Dr. John A. Ryan is chairman, will present studies on the following subjects: Pope Benedict XV's letter to the belligerent nations; the ethics in Stratmann's "Church and War"; the effects of the Roman law and Protestant theology on international ethics; the morality of war; the Mystical Body of Christ; the world state; the United States constitution and international affairs; Saint Thomas Aquinas and peace; and international affairs as treated in text-books on ethics and moral theology. The Committee on International Law and Organization, of which Professor Charles G. Fenwick of Bryn Mawr College is chairman, will present a report on the World Court. Other equally comprehensive studies will be rendered by the Committee on Economic Relations, of which Professor Parker T. Moon of Columbia University is chairman; the Latin America Committee, of which the Reverend R. A. McGowan, Assistant Director of the Department of Social Action, N. C. W. C., is chairman; the Committee on United States Dependencies of which Miss Elizabeth M. Lynskey, professor of international rela-

Catholic Peace Work

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tions, at Hunter College, New York, is chairman; the Committee on European Relations, of which the Reverend Joseph F. Thorning, S.J., of Georgetown University is chairman; the Committee on Asia, of which William Franklin Sands of Washington, D. C., is chairman; and the Committee on Agriculture of which the Right Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara, Bishop of Great Falls, Montana, is chairman. We have gone into this detail because we believe it best gives an idea of the thoroughness and efficient organization of the work within the Church for peace. As the Holy Father recalled at Christmas time, the daily and universal prayer of the Church is "Give us peace," and in this spirit the endless work for the adjustment of all too human details is being undertaken.

Some Adjustment Necessary

HERE are four highly important statements. First, the disclosure by Secretary Lamont that there are still 6,050,000 Americans "out of a job, able to work and looking for a job." Second, the announcement of the Bureau of Internal Revenue that the total gross income for individuals and corporations in 1929 amounted to $141,552,869,422, of which $112,789,903,992 was of corporations and $28,762,965,430 of individuals. Third, the estimate by the National Industrial Conference Board, that in the period between 1914 and 1929 there was an increase of 32.8 percent in the national wealth and an increase of 59.2 percent in the national income. And fourth, the statement by the Grain Stabilization Corporation that unless there is a 20 percent reduction in the planting of wheat in the forthcoming year, the domestic market will be glutted. What, one may well ask, is the import of these huge estimates? Briefly, it is that machinery is running away with man. The ingenious combinations of wheels, rods and metal fingers that have been set going to help men produce the goods of this world have got out of control. They are going on turning out goods in profusion, but great numbers of men who might benefit are without the means of buying. The 10 percent of the population who own 90 percent of the machines, like King Midas, are having unusable wealth pile up around them while acute misery stalks abroad in the land. The obvious solution to the dilemma is to have the men who operate the machines work fewer hours, which would take care of unemployment, and receive higher wages, which would take care of consumption. The difficulty is to have these provisions carried out equably. For instance, if one farmer cuts his production 20 percent and his neighbor does not, the first farmer is out just 20 percent of his possible revenue. If one employer reduces the hours of labor of his employees and pays them higher wages, while his competitor does not, obviously the first will not be able to stay in business for long. This unsocial use of the power of machines by man against man presents a fundamental problem which calls for the cooperative efforts of business, labor, the state and the Church to solve. At the least, the enactment of a federal minimum wage and minimum hours law would seem to be the simplest and fairest beginning of a new economic system permitting individual initiative without mass starvation of men by machines run amuck.

Catholic Doctors Unite

WE HAVE commented elsewhere in our columns this week at some length upon the subversive action of the Federal Council of the Church of Christ in America, but space must be given to recording the important and highly practical step taken by the Catholic physicians of the Bronx district of New York City, to meet the menace of paganism. What it is hoped will be the beginning of a national movement for the consolidation of Catholic doctors throughout the United States, was launched at Fordham University at the first meeting of the newly established Catholic Physician's Guild of the Bronx, at which a group of fifty doctors adopted a resolution condemning contraceptive birth control as unsound medicine and unsound morality. Members of the executive council of the Catholic Physicians' Guild of Brooklyn had on the previous night approved of a resolution similar to that of the Bronx doctors. One of the physicians present and also a professor of Fordham University expressed the hope that the physicians' movement would spread rapidly, and there followed the passage of another resolution calling for the institution throughout the United States of a chain of societies of Catholic doctors.

THE REVEREND IGNATIUS W. COX, professor of ethics at Fordham University and moderator of the Bronx guild, expressed the hope that in two or three years the situation would be such as to allow the calling in New York of a convention representing a national federation of Catholic doctors that would bring to a halt the paganism of a group whose principles were not condemned but approved by the statement of the Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The Reverend Aloysius J. Hogan, in an address at the Mass preceding the meeting, described the assembly as "an example of showing the world Catholic doctrine and principle in practice. Clear and honest thinking, Catholic moral principles, and a real appreciation of the noble dignity of your profession," he said, "will enable each one of you to take his particular part in the Catholic Church's practical program for the regeneration and revivification of human society." He added that the events of the last few days had made the need of the guild quite clear, evidently referring to the Federal Council's statement. It is certain that thousands of physicians not of their faith agree with the Catholic doctors and will stand with them in their opposition to the spread of a pagan practice which is wrecking the health and destroying the power of motherhood and fatherhood of millions of men and women.

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"JESUS: A Replevin," by Charles Hall Perry, in *Scribner's Magazine* for April, is commonplace enough in its general tenor, but in the amount of erroneous statement, fallacious reasoning and superficial exegesis which it contains it is unusually preposterous. We are, of course, accustomed to confusion between the Virgin Birth and the Immaculate Conception, but the results of this confusion have seldom combined cock-sureness with ignorance so perfectly as here. "The dogma [of the Virgin Birth]," says Mr. Perry, "with its consequent Mariology was condemned in the fifth century by Pope Gelasius. For two centuries, the religious orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans combated bitterly over these questions. It was finally settled when the Papacy sided with the Franciscans. From that time the Virgin Birth has been unquestioned in the Catholic Church. . . . The Virgin Birth would necessitate a further miracle to give Him [Our Lord] masculine traits, which Mary could not supply. . . . The Church affirms also that Jesus was without original sin—whatever that is. . . . Also that Mary was immaculately conceived from her mother." We will not try to make sense out of this farrago of repulsive nonsense, much less to refute it. It may be of some use, however, to state once more that the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception is entirely different from that of the Virgin Birth, deals with a wholly spiritual event, and means that Our Lord's mother, who was born of human parents in the natural way, was conceived without original sin, i.e., that her soul was sanctified in the first moment of its existence. If *Scribner's Magazine* is to maintain the high reputation it has long enjoyed, its editors would do well to ascertain before publication that theological articles, even when written by a "minister in two denominations," are not wholly puerile. An absurdly scrambled burlesque of English history is at present enjoying a well-deserved success. But theology of the same sort is more revolting than humorous.

Scrambled Theology

PERHAPS we should be ashamed to confess it, but we cannot emulate the pained surprise with which most of our editorial colleagues refer to the recent Dreiser-Lewis fracas at the Metropolitan Club in New York. Their utterances are not all solemn, but even the playful ones imperfectly dissemble a note of deploring. For our part, we were not especially shocked; we do not particularly feel that the hand-to-hand (or more strictly, hand-to-cheek) encounter was unworthy of the two principals involved, and we cannot see why anyone should talk as if it were. It was a lapse of charity and taste, no doubt, for Mr. Lewis, rightly or wrongly, to accuse Mr. Dreiser at a public dinner of plagiarizing Mrs. Lewis's book; it was equally a lapse for Mr. Dreiser to retort with a slap. But when did we begin to associate these two virtues with these two men? Charity is surely not the central characteristic of the author of "Babbitt" and "Gantry" (not to mention that oration on the American Philistine delivered not so very long ago in Stockholm). As to getting excited about Mr. Dreiser's lapses of taste at this date, we should have thought that beyond anyone's power. We have heard a good many private comments on the incident, and they are all quite free from this sentiment of regret. Indeed, the general pleasure over the fact that Mr. Dreiser punched Mr. Lewis's head is impaired, we should say, only by a soupçon of dissatisfaction that Mr. Lewis was restrained before he could punch Mr. Dreiser's.

Dreiser versus Lewis

SHANGHAI, which has yielded so many data of depravity of the "off-scourings-of-Orient-and-Occident" variety, now makes the news with a very different contribution. The Orient and the Occident are not united in a common bond of badness this time, but are separated by their ideals of what is good. The Commercial Press of Shanghai, China's most successful publishing corporation, recently sent its managing editor on a world tour of inquiry into publishing methods. Upon his return, filled with zeal for the Western technique of competition and reward, he announced to his corps of three hundred odd editors that they were to get more money. They had been habitually overworking, for their salaries, and the difference was to be made up to them in the form of bonuses "as a reward for unusual diligence." Well, the Chinee, heathen or not, is peculiar, as we know. The editors became strongly indignant. "As intelligentsia" they averred that they had been "insulted." The Commercial Press was trying to treat them like "common contract coolie laborers." After a very considerable row, the order had to be withdrawn. We are conscious of a feeling of wistfulness as we record the incident.

Intelligentsia Oblige

IT IS well to keep our sense of proportion about the New York City park patrolman recently convicted of unprovoked brutality toward a woman arrestee. That a man known to be suffering from a nerve malady liable to express itself in a mania of truculence, was entrusted with regular police duty, is certainly shocking. But it is very unlikely that the case is representative, or that the fault in the matter—whether of carelessness, politics-playing or merely misplaced charity—extended beyond the patrolman's immediate superiors. Now, when the general suspicion is aroused by the noisome exposés of the vice squad, we should in common fairness be wary of overjudging particular cases. It is a fact, and not a pretty fancy, that the vast body of New York policemen are brave and straight. Working, one may say, anonymously, and without any adequate return in gratitude, they do a hard job, and do it well. This fact should not be forgotten.

Policemen— and Policemen

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DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN

By NATHALIE TROUBETSKOY

While Easter will be a festival time for us, and even those who have forgotten the significance of the occasion will gayly join in the spirit of rejoicing, millions of men and women in one of the largest nations of the earth will be under compulsion not to celebrate. They will work as they would on any other day. With them the last refuge of the individual, the spirit, is invaded and enslaved. The beauty that spirit is capable of, Princess Troubetskoy here suggests to us. We can then appreciate the full tragedy of the Soviet Easter envisaged by Mr. Phillips in his article which follows.—The Editors.

IT IS dark in Russia now. Dark in the desolate streets, dark in the deserted fields fast losing their white cloak of mystery and illusion. For who could tell what was hidden under the snow? It may be the glittering gold of heavenly pavements or the blinding greenness of the fields of Eden. . . . One could imagine, and wait, and hope. . . . The darkness lies more heavily than anywhere else on the Russian mind and the Russian soul. Slowly pass the heavy days of Lent. Lent, in spite of all. One can still remember it, and smell it in the air: melting snow, frying oil, caraway seeds. Of the last two one gets surreptitious sniffs, but the first, that scent of new water, new life, new hope cannot be banned by any human law. Spring has to come, and with it Easter and Resurrection. What can stop its triumphant progress and who can kill Christianity? Of how much avail were the edicts and persecutions of old Rome?

The time is that of floods, and fasting, and a fluid, fanciful felicity; a time of fervent praying and fanatical giving. The scene is not in the land of fantastic make-believe, but in the land of the faithful has-been, that fairyland of old Russia that still has its fastnesses in the hearts of her exile children.

Would you like to see the mystery play built up by faith and fatalism and spring in that far-away forgotten land of pre-war days? The theme is the everlasting, ever mysterious one of the tragedy of the Cross. The setting is of nearly adequate beauty for the theme—the almost unbearable, entirely unforgettable, beauty of early spring in the Ukraine—the delicacy of colorings, the daintiness of outlines, the dizziness of scent and sunshine and sparkling waters.

The young birch woods, clad in their first green leaves, stand drooping like young maidens in a dream, all in a haze of translucent, unearthly greenness. They are full of lassitude and love, and the languor of expectation. Slender trailing pale arms, soft slim silver bodies standing perfectly motionless in that stillness of a spring morning. It is a stillness that can be heard, a breathless waiting for resurrection and new life. The peaceful, clear-eyed river has long ago left her imprisoning banks, and is roaming free, turbulent, daringly close to the fairy feet of the fairy woods and the little white mushrooms of cottages clustered at the bottom of the misty hills. The sky is of an incredible blueness, the sun of dazzling intensity; here and there in the creeks and crannies the snow is still of a blinding whiteness. The green haze covers all. The distances are green, the air is green, the very smells are green, from the green newly-born water and the multitudes of scented green things coming up to the surface with their long-stored sweetness.

While the heads of the maiden birches touch the limpid azure of skies, their feet tread reality and earth, the reality of a multitude of live hues and a multitude of live creatures. Yellows from lemon cowslips to lacquered buttercups, shades of purples in anemones, and the nameless ones, that like willing serfs, make a soft carpet for the regal ones—the violets. Vivid pools of a roseate purple lie here and there, as if poured from some magic vial of liquid paint. The sudden splashes of concentrated color seem so strangely intense in a world of semi-tones, and semi-reality. Here the village maidens will come in the morning of Good Friday to make the garlands for the Holy Sepulcher. Pallid, large-eyed, from many months of bending over their spinning-wheels and many weeks of fasting; slender bodies drooping, they stand like their green sisters stretching their young arms to the sun, their heads in a green haze of love, languor and Lent. For the Lent of Russia is fanatically vigorous: fasting spells starvation; it means just eating enough to live, and sometimes not even that.

It is the women, as usual the foundation of the Church, who keep the law unto very death. The men are not so strong and little children are weak enough to be exempt. The women fast and work, the maidens fast and dream, and all wait silently, breathlessly for Easter—the feast of feasts, the day of days, the joy of joys. Easter—the opened door to summer happiness, life, fulfilment! As the days of Lent go slowly by, so the faces of the women grow more transparent till the soul shows through, the ardent, clear, simple soul of mystic and peasant.

Slim, dark, with tiny hands and feet, and nymph-like bodies, the girls of the Ukraine are very lovely. Theirs is a beauty of form and movement and coloring, rather than a definite regularity of feature. Aryan by race, Latin in temperament, they have something French in allure and vivacity, Eastern in temper and subtlety, and wholly Slav in morality. Their lingo is phonetically Latin, with the rounded, open vowels and lovely cadences of old Italian. It is a language for song, and the Ukrainians do sing, like birds, with voices that are placed by nature.

But the girls do not sing as they come back from the woods with the burden of violets and periwinkles,

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imaginary sorrows and real sadness. For it is Good Friday. Reverently, adoringly, the violet wreaths are circling the prone figure of Christ Crucified. The painting is so old that the white Body is felt rather than seen; only the crimson drops of Blood are undying and undimmed. It was brought from the Holy of Holies in the early hours of the afternoon, carried high over the low-bent heads and prostrate forms of the crowd by the highest and mightiest of the parish. First came the old squire of the village, tall, unbent by his eighty years or his Crimean wounds, and the village doctor, thin, gaunt, with the face and mind of visionary and martyr; behind them, the local millionaire, farmer, miller and money-lender combined, urbane, unctious, resplendent in a peasant's coat of fine blue cloth and glittering top-boots, and then the representative of law and order, the burly, swashbuckling police officer, slit-eyed and perspiring.

For the moment the so-different faces were lit up with the same inner glow of reverence, for the moment they were friends and equals. Slowly the procession came down the middle of the church, gently the four tall men lowered their mystic Burden onto the bier of black and silver and purple. Wails of exquisite ecstatic pain poured down from the inspired choir, and the many hundred white candles flared and flickered and swam in the already dimming light.

The day is spent, the sun has gone. Across the water the young birches are stooping to pick up the cloak of white mist lying at their feet. It is round their shoulders, their light heads still trace a filigree on the paling sky. Gone, and darkness comes. The tones of earth and sky are sepia, purple, black, like those of the picture in the church, with the crimson blood of the setting sun, which is quickly dying and soon dimmed. The chill of winter and death is back in the air, hope seems further, sorrow nearer. Through the darkening lanes moves an unceasing, shadowy stream of the faithful, with bent heads, diffident footsteps, wrapt in somber clothing and somber thoughts, as befits the evening of sorrowful remorse. For the Lord is dead and will be buried before the sun rises.

Only the women will come to this last sad service and a few very old men, to whom death is becoming a near and familiar friend. There will only be the simple singing in unison of quavering high-pitched voices, the faint dispersed lights of the small wax candles in patient hands tired with life and labor. Youth and the future in the dark stillness of the village are sleeping the heavy sleep of those tired by life and love.

It is all over. Through a mullioned window creeps a beam of sun, slides across the now empty center of the church, hesitates, as if searching just over a patch of candle-grease and withered violets on the well-worn floor, then swiftly darts to the screen. For a moment the *Ikonostas* stands revealed as a golden wall towering up to the dome, then the sun finds a chink between the drawn amber silk curtains and drops through the royal gates. It has found its home and the Holy of Holies.

The outer world is intensely vigorous and real. Chimneys are smoking busily, housewives are bustling about their swept and garnished homes, the girls lay out their vivid-hued finery. For before another sun rises will not the Lord rise and the feast of feasts begin?

Only the young birches, like love-sick maidens, droop and dream in a haze of mystic greenness.

THE SOVIET EASTER

By CHARLES PHILLIPS

IT IS not by religious tradition alone, but by the very working of nature, that Eastertide in such a northern clime as Russia is a particularly happy season. Nature herself makes it so. Earth, for long months more darkened, more ice-locked and winter-bound than in other lands breaks all the more freely into the new life of running streams, of loosening sod. Soil, sun and air begin to stir with fresh light, fresh warmth. The bloom of youth once more brushes the venerable and withered cheek of old Mother Earth. Everything living rejoices. Man, tasting the added joyance of spiritual rejuvenation, is as happy then as he ever can be in this world.

And yet take away from the same man in the same clime the spiritual significance of Easter and he is lost. He has had it too long to be happy without it. The flush of new earth-life, new animal-life, has been for him too long colored with the fresh rose of spiritual resurrection to mean anything without it. His Easter traditions are as much in the marrow of his bones as his blood is in his veins. Without those traditions Eastertide can be for him, down deep in his heart, not the happiest but the saddest season of the year.

It is the saddest season of the year in Russia today.

Ever since I have known Russia I have thought of it with gladness at Easter time. Excepting Poland, no land on earth has ever made such a joyous festival of Easter as Russia; go back to Tolstoy, read his novel "Resurrection" again, and you will understand what Easter used to mean to the Russian people. Such spontaneous sharing of delight, such happy exchange of gifts and greetings, such colorful ceremonies both of church ritual and popular tradition, such altar flowers, such brightness of candle-light, such gaiety of dress . . . such a happy time!

This was the Russian Easter of other days, of other years as far back as the time when Christianity first came to the Muscovite. But that Easter is no more.

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Today, all that is gone. Easter of 1931, if the program inaugurated last year be repeated, and that it will be is alas a foregone conclusion, marks as nothing else does in the Russia of today the new godless era, an era in which there shall be no Easter any more; a very sad era indeed, if the natural instincts of man count for anything.

From now on—that is, as long as the present Soviet rulers remain in power—Easter is banned in Russia; proscribed, forbidden, by letter of the law. But the banning of it is a good deal more than a mere official prohibition. The steps now being taken by the Bolshevik government to do away absolutely with the Easter festival in Russia are drastic beyond belief. Supplementing the order of the day which obliges all workers to report at their place of employment each morning during Holy Week (thus forestalling any danger of churchgoing), so that they may earn money to be contributed to the funds of the "godless movement"—supplementing this order, are elaborate plans designed to distract the people from all thoughts of a religious celebration, before or after the feast day itself. These plans embrace not only Easter Sunday, but Easter eve and Easter night.

To begin with, in Moscow free theatre tickets are distributed by the Trade Union Council, these tickets admitting spectators to plays, cinemas or other entertainments which are anti-Easter and anti-religious propaganda of the most violent kind. Last year 100,000 of these tickets were issued. Film stories which describe church and religion as tools of capitalism and the oppressors of the poor, dramas excoriating and comedies ridiculing Christianity, God, religion of all kinds, will supply the crowds of Russian towns and cities with entertainment. Add to this a series of widely broadcast radio lectures reaching even the remotest villages of the country, bringing to them the message of godlessness, and we have a godless program with a vengeance indeed.

The Soviet government in its warfare against Easter is thus, as it will be seen, using every instrument at the command of the modern mind to spread its anti-religious propaganda. The radio, of course, plays a large rôle in such a movement. But the Soviets know well the special and peculiar power of appeal to the eye. Hence the moving picture and the poster are particularly favored as agencies of what they call "enlightenment." I know something about the poster art of the Russians; they have a very special gift for graphic propaganda. Some of their recent anti-religious posters reveal them at their very "best" when drawing pictures designed to inflame the popular mind against the idea of religion. We have, for example, the gloating capitalist, riding a gigantic cross to which is harnessed a mob of weary laborers. Again, we have a great procession of toilers led by a haloed Christ Who plunges them into the abysmal maw of capitalism. Pictures of this kind, vivid in coloring, dramatic, inflammatory, are plastered all over the wide domains of Russia to help make of Easter, once the people's happiest feast day, a byword and a mockery.

Great bonfires in which sacred articles are burned, torchlight processions, mock-religious carnivals with floats ridiculing sacred customs—these too are among the items of the Soviet anti-Easter propaganda. But the program does not stop with the public demonstrations which parades, theatres and posters afford. The home, too, is penetrated; the anti-religious propaganda of the Soviets invades even the most sacred precinct of the Russian house. That most sacred precinct has been, for ages, the "holy corner," where the treasured family ikon—pictures of Christ or saint—has reposed, decorated at Easter time with flowers and lit with vigil lights; the center of family worship. A concentrated movement to make over this long-reverenced "holy corner" into a "godless corner" was instituted last year when Easter Sunday was the day set for the formal and ceremonious substitution of pictures of Marx and Lenin for the once-cherished pictures of Christ, the Blessed Virgin or the family's patron saint.

The ringing of the Easter bells has always been one of the most joyous features of the Resurrection festival in Russia. Easter today is a sadly silent day. There can be no bell-ringing, not even where there are bells; for woe betide that courageous fool who will ring an Easter bell in a land where the Artist's Union expels any member who sings in a church choir! Soon, for that matter, there will not be any church bells left in Russia. Last year, when the Soviet's Godless Union arranged a public demonstration in protest against Pope Pius's call for universal prayers for Russia, they shipped ten carloads of church bells, sacred images and crucifixes to Moscow, there to be melted down and sold for the benefit of the same Godless Union.

In the midst of all this concerted action against religion, with Easter as the strategic and central point of attack, the press is of course not forgotten. The Godless Union, which is the national organization devoted to the destruction of religion in Russia, leads the press campaign with its official organ, the *Godless*. Since this Godless Union has now a membership of some three million, it enjoys a tremendous advantage in circulating its publications. Its official organ, it is claimed, has now a subscription list of 1,500,000. On Easter Sunday tens of thousands of free copies of the *Godless* are distributed by airplane throughout the country. The bright spring sky of Russia's Easter Day is darkened by the avion fleets of "the godless ones."

What is the effect of all this on the Russian mind? What will be the effect in years to come?

Such a spectacle is a sad thing for the Christian world to contemplate, and if I know my Russian at all, as I believe I do, he finds it a sad thing to experience, in spite of the noisy distractions which the godless celebrations of the Soviets supply. After all, the "popularity" of these celebrations is forced, a thing imposed upon, instead of a thing growing out of, the mass mind. The tradition of Easter as a religious

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festival is too ingrained in the Russian's heart to permit him to be entirely satisfied with it done away with. It is, I repeat—this thousand-year-old tradition of Easter as a spiritual festival—as deeply a part of him as is his natural joyance in the coming of spring's fresh light and new life after the iron bondage of dark winter months. It is difficult to believe that he willingly gives it up; all the more so, since it is being taken from him by so ponderous an external movement as this. It may indeed be that the "godless ones" now in power have, by the very dimensions of their eagerness to banish Easter, defeated their own purpose.

Still, facing the fact, and realizing the implacable intentions of the Soviet government, one might well despair; one might envision a future Russia truly godless, a Russia that has forgotten its once joyous Eastertide, were it not for the story that history has to tell. History tells us that warfare against God eventually fails. This is not the first time that men have sought to tear out by the roots the idea of God from the human mind. Read the story of the French Revolution; visualize that revolting scene when a naked prostitute was set dancing on the altar of Notre Dame in Paris . . . and what of it? France is far from godless today; France, in fact, is more God-given today than she ever was: witness the Catholic revival. But we can come closer still to home for our reassurance. As Easter is banned today in Russia, so was Christmas once banned in England. Surprising? Read this item taken from the *Flying Eagle Gazette,* London, December 24, 1652:

> The House (Parliament) . . . before they rose, were presented with a terrible Remonstrance against Christmas-day, grounded upon divine Scriptures: II Cor., v, 16; I Cor., xv, 14, 17; and in honor of the Lord's day, grounded on these Scriptures: John, xx, 1; Rev., 1, 10; in which Christmas is called Anti Christ's-masse, and those Mass-mongers and Papists who observe it, etc. In consequence of which, Parliament spent some Time in Consultation about the abolition of Christmas-day, pass'd orders to that Effect, and resol'd to sit on the following Day, which is commonly called Christmas-day.

Did Christmas pass away in England? Did it pass away in America, to which some of our Pilgrim fathers brought just such sentiments as those aired in Parliament in 1652? No. We still have Christmas. And Russia will have her Easter again.

A FAMILY OF PAINTERS

By JAMES W. LANE

IT IS easier for English-speaking people to think of a family devoted to the stage or to literature than of one devoted to brushes and color. The Barrymores and Barretts, the Terrys and Trees, the Huxleys and Sitwells, are perhaps recipients of more space in the news than the La Farges. But if there ever was an American painter who transmitted to the full his love, and usually his practice, of painting to his descendants, that artist was John La Farge. At the Wildenstein galleries there has been during the month of March a loan exhibition of paintings by John La Farge and his descendants, so that we may not only gauge the genius of John La Farge himself but also witness how his mantle has descended, with variations in its cut and texture, upon the shoulders of his three sons and six grandsons.

John La Farge is one of the great figures in American painting. He can be numbered among those few artists who paint in a score of styles and fall down in none of them. This itself is a testimony of genius, because, although genius is versatile, its versatility is not always evenly good. But with La Farge, everything he touched showed a clearness of conception, a clearness of atmosphere, and a disciplined firmness of line very foreign to the average ideals of the present moment. So deeply was he immersed in the spirit of art that, while his water-colors show an occasional tightness of style reminiscent of the fashion of the eighteen-eighties, they glow with an honesty of delicate color as might a Persian vase. So deeply, too, was his scholar's mind engrossed with the sensuous delight which as an artist he derived from watching nature that he has left us a priceless heritage in two fine books, "Considerations on Painting" and "An Artist's Letters from Japan." Added to this were his achievements in creating the highest level that American stained glass has ever reached and in ushering American mural painting into a new era of grace. His glass in the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, New York, and his murals in the Church of the Ascension, New York, in Trinity Church, Boston, and in the Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, are worth long pilgrimages to see.

Couture was John La Farge's first master. But although some of his work recalls Couture's idea of the nude, as well as the flowing tresses down a nude body that made Henner sought after and Ingres's "La Source" celebrated, La Farge was no mere student copyist. In his style, he paints his oils now like Fantin-Latour, in the flower-pieces; now like Twachtman, in the "Snowfield, Newport"; now like Courbet, in the "Paradise Valley, Newport"; now like a more restrained but more feelingful Delacroix, in the "Wise Men of the East"; and now like a portraitist such as Manet, in the "Portrait of C. Grant La Farge." The earlier oils, especially the "Old House in Snow" of 1860, are, like the early work of so many other masters, Matisse and Homer, for example, tight and timid.

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In particular, the very early Homer that was in the show at the Museum of Modern Art last summer, a painting of a porched house, resembled this early La Farge closely. And yet each painting of La Farge, if calling up certain aesthetic echoes, reveals an original, serene and untroubled spirit, some essence gay and well-knit and velvety, rising above the complex problems which he has solved, and solved without once resorting to a cliché.

His water-colors, framed mostly in the style of the period, with broad mats of gilded cardboard, show a more classical background. There is a splendid drapery study, "The Three Marys," which has more subtle variations of shade in each tone than perhaps any other picture in the exhibition. Degas and Tiepolo would have envied it. In the Samoan and Tahitian scenes lovely palettes of peacock blue and green predominate, and there is at least one work of the highest order, the "View near Dambula, Ceylon." These works indicate that Mr. Duncan Phillips was right in saying that the classical influences on La Farge were Masaccio and Raphael, Bellini and Titian, and that his "aesthetic understanding stretched across the world to the ancient mystics of China and to the primitive dance rhythms of Polynesian islanders." There is a thought for Catholics, that here was one of them who by incorporating in his mind whatever was beautiful in the most alien cultures made the whole world his home.

John La Farge's sons—Bancel, C. Grant, and Oliver H. P.—possess not quite the wide range of their father, but their works have great merit. The nocturnes of Bancel, done really at night with a small lamp and in pastel, the scenes being the sea and clouds at Tuckernuck, are a phase of subject-matter which he alone has developed. One thinks of Chopin, a little less dreamy Chopin, as one views these various studies of nature's moods. The "Scorpio," a seascape, painted on a screen, with the "patines of bright gold" clause from "The Merchant of Venice" as an inscription, is utterly charming and has been long admired by this critic. The opaline pastels of "Surf" and "The Beach" are in a more informal manner, but perfectly keyed. Why have not more American modernists taken their inspiration from the sea? And from the sea at night? But since the day of Ryder and Whistler this treatment has gone out. We could have been spared the enormous quantity of chocolate and duller browns which, as in the work of Kuniyoshi, Friesz and Vlaminck, tend to depress modern painting.

Several designs for windows in churches, one of them for St. Paul, Minnesota (where, therefore, there will be work of three generations of La Farges, as Henry, a grandson, has also designed a window there), a mosaic figure, and a gigantic cartoon for the mosaic decoration of Trinity College Chapel in Washington, complete Bancel's work. The one example of a mosaic figure in the exhibition is worth a description apart. Small stones, three-eighths by five-eighths of a centimeter, are chipped by a chisel-like tool, and the acme of subtle shading and of curves can be produced, although the colors of the stones do not seem to vary greatly and only one of them is curved. The color effect obtained is a tribute to the artist's knowledge of color-divisionism or color-juxtaposition.

Oliver H. P. La Farge, the author of "Laughing Boy," hitherto a business man, drank in so well the aesthetic atmosphere in his family that when he turned to painting, as he did throughout his life of affairs, he found himself an instinctive painter. His three water-colors exhibited here, particularly the "Mount Rainier," indicate the La Farge characteristics—smoothness, graceful design, and clear, pleasing color.

C. Grant La Farge exhibits, like his son Oliver, chiefly scenes or iconography of American Indian life, for these two La Farges are primarily ethnologists. Grant, the father, noted also for his having designed St. Matthew's Church in Washington, has, in his minute work, the spirit of an engraver on armor or of a niellist, and how his color glows!

So we come to the third generation. We find L. Bancel, Christopher, Henry, Oliver, young John and Thomas. L. Bancel is an architect whose water-colors and sketches have the singing color of his grandfather. But it is interesting to note the change in water-color technique between the two generations. Whereas the generation of John La Farge used much body color in its water-colors, the modern school uses practically none. Instead, it lets the white paper of the block sparkle through here and there, enlivening the stretches of pigment. This modern innovation undoubtedly makes it easier to arrive at effects, yet it needs much exact science to obtain the expected results of breadth and sweep.

Of all the younger generation of La Farges, Thomas employs this bold technique most effectively. He is an avowed admirer of Homer, the one American of the nineteenth century, excepting Sargent, to practise the style, but just as Homer thus gained a ruggedness that all of our other water-colorists then lacked, so Thomas La Farge is a forceful, uncompromising artist. In fact, in "Maryland," a wonderful study of an autumn cornfield, in "Oak Tree, October," in "Palm Trees" (not the one on the catalogue), in "Square-Sail," in the "Banana Tree," and in the "Sea Turtle," he has shown a sense of color that, to my mind, Homer rarely had. Though Homer often uses, in his work from Bermuda and the Bahamas, a bright vermilion or blood-red and the palest of aquamarine, seldom any yellow, his work, as a whole, is somber and confined to the blue-green palette.

Thomas La Farge, on the other hand, has much if not quite all of Homer's sweep, but also a greater refinement, a greater range of color, and in one instance at least, his "Palm Trees," greater design. The wash that was applied to represent the billowed-out canvas in "Square-Sail" is eminently successful in suggesting both its lighting and texture. The scarlet of the life-

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boat davit of course comes straight from Homer. In "Gulf Stream" he has attempted a subject similar to Homer's "Gulf Stream" in the Metropolitan. On a smallish block he has represented as much terror as Homer did on a large oil-canvas, twenty-three by forty-nine inches. But he has omitted the sharks, the waterspout, and the sailing vessel in the background, also the rather wooden Negro, by which Homer obtained local color. He concentrates, on the other hand, upon delineating the attitudes of his two worn-out sailors, the slack main-sheet, and the turbulent wake behind his boat. Although the line and the brushing is not so assured as Homer's, the little picture vibrates with the suggestion of chaos and of motion.

La Farge understands the spirit of place, the *genius loci*, superiority—as perhaps Homer caught the spirit of Maine and the Adirondacks. "Banana Tree" is full of the damp, steamy, luxuriant hotness of tropical undergrowth. His "Turtle" is ferocious, yet one feels that it is beautiful—beautiful with the weight of the jeweled shell it carries through the deep blue tropical water. I cannot speak too highly of the "Maryland," for it is a landscape which translates Shelley's "breath of autumn's being" into color. Indeed this water-color is a riot of muted colors, held in leash by an eye so discipined as to be able to prevent the slightest deviation from harmony. Needless to say, when an artist plays with so many tones on a small block he is doing a difficult thing and, unless careful, courting disaster. But all of Thomas La Farge's efforts, whether in tone or in design, come off.

There is, to illustrate this, his most ambitious work, a silk screen representing two hawks fighting. The same uncanny ability to recapture the spirit of Japanese art, the same refinement of temperament, which his grandfather possessed is shown in it. The whole glorious thing, from the Japanese formula for the background hills to the microscopic attention that has been expended on such matters as the plumage, eyes and position of the whirling hawks, is a joy. Not less than five hundred washes of pigment were applied to the silk! It is only to be regretted that Thomas La Farge has not exhibited anything in oil. As a fact, the sole oils in the exhibit, outside of John La Farge's seven oil paintings, are three by Bancel, sr.

Christopher La Farge, in "Endless Picardy" and "Romney Marshes," has adhered to landscapes of a more delicate and conventional type. They are water-colors in an apple-green color, with the correct, literal feeling of the British school of Leonard Richmond, but intimate and charming, possessing fascinating registers for the distance. They, and two of the pastels by Mr. Oliver H. P. La Farge, are restful as the landscapes of Georges Michel were restful—because they placed the emphasis on the horizontal.

Henry La Farge's design for a window at St. Paul's Seminary, St. Paul, is interesting in color and pattern. It is in the form of a wheel whose spokes broaden at their ends into globular compartments containing the signs of the four evangelists—the lion, ox, eagle, of Saints Mark, Luke, and John, and the angel of Saint Matthew. If all Catholic churches in America could plume themselves upon having such well-designed windows—to mention only one of the many openings for constructional aesthetic improvement—there would be no need for a Liturgical Arts Society for the reorientation of taste.

The greatest defect among these studious painters in this exhibition, however, is that their subjects are obviously static. What I mean is that the La Farges, with the exception of Thomas, represent subjects in slow motion arrested rather than in quick motion arrested, as Mahonri Young and Gifford Beal do. It is a pity, also, that one misses portraiture in the La Farges. Doubtless, for temperamental reasons, they have wished to leave that to men like Henri. But because they prefer more dreamy and contemplative things such as landscape, they are in harmony with the gracious essence they feel in nature. Each of these descendants of John La Farge could say with him, as he wrote from Japan:

> [I have] proposed . . . to be, at least for moments, in some relation to what I have to represent; that is to say, in an atmosphere not inimical, as ours is, to what we call the miraculous. Here, at least, I am not forced to consider external nature as separate and opposed, and I can fall into moods of thought—or, if you prefer, of feeling—in which the edges of all things blend, and man and the outside world pass into each other.

Refinement and knowledge, then, guide the hands of John La Farge's descendants as they guided those of John La Farge himself. How refreshing this is to one who has observed and studied many of the modernistic paintings where strident reds and other clashing tones proclaim the seeker after publicity or sensation, not your true colorist. The idea behind La Farge work does not shout; it humbly lays its thesis of happiness, serenity, and love of color and design before you, you to accept it if you have the capacity. For what the La Farges have realized, probably unconsciously, is that art should be a dream and not, as some of their contemporaries have realized it, a bad dream.

The Old Crofter

Over and through the hill Christ's blood is running
To save bracken and stone, to redeem the rowan:
I will name everything, for has not all creation
A like share in His glory with flesh and blood?

So, when Blood ran, I say it was for flesh and blood.
When Water ran, I say it was for these,
The bracken, and the rowan, and the stone.
O that I could delight them in fair exchange!
But they need no man's bounty nor appraisal.

Yes; past all contradiction, the many waters
Flow from His wounds, the glorious earth is His body.
Living here alone, I reason it thus.

L. A. G. Strong.

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CHURCH AND STATE IN MEXICO

II. CLOUDCUCKOOCITY: 1810-1930

By E. R. PINEDA

OFFICIALLY, the ideology of the French Revolution, which began to invade New Spain the latter part of the eighteenth century came on the wings of His Catholic Majesty's decrees. Thus it assumed the added weight of authority and, at the same time, established a precedent. Unofficially, the French Revolution crept in through smuggled books that found their way to many a private library and even to the rectory and the episcopal palace. Its egalitarian doctrines would specially appeal to the creoles, who, excluded from office by the home government because of its policy of divide and rule, chafed under the discrimination. With independence, and the Inquisition abolished, Mexico, like the rest of Spanish America, was soon to be visited by the measles of French revolutionary thought, a child's disease to be sure, but likely to be quite virulent on virgin soil.

Already the clash of ideas was discernible: the old order, that is, authority and equalization (the unequal treatment of unequals as a means to approach equality) versus revolt and egalitarianism. Independence did not dissolve the union of Church and state, nor the paramount position of Catholicism to the exclusion of all other religions, yet it was evident that if the colonial polity were to be disrupted by such conflicting philosophies, the Church would suffer the greatest harm as the pivotal center of the system.

Complications soon developed. The War of Independence in Mexico, as in Latin America, being at bottom a race war, the opinions of American historians to the contrary notwithstanding, it was particularly destructive. The liberating armies had been recruited from agricultural workers and miners, so that at the close of the eleven-year struggle agriculture and mining were in a sorry state of neglect, nor was it possible to work the mines, the greatest source of wealth under the colony, because the Spaniards, who constituted the directing element, had been expelled from the country, not unlike the Tories, with their initiative and their capital. The colonial foreign trade, being almost exclusively with the mother country, was forfeited to the colonies that remained loyal to Spain. Smuggling soon became an institution, and revenues fell off from about 20,000,000 pesos in 1808 to 9,328,740 in 1822, the first year of independent life, while the wages of liberty rose to between 15,000,000 and 34,000,000 pesos prior to 1850 as compared with 10,500,000 pesos, the expenditures under the viceroyalty; nor was the budget balanced until 1894, when the first surplus was obtained.

Of course, the economic aspect of independence was hardly understood at that time. In fact, Mexicans knew and understood then even less of economics than they do today. The country was fabulously wealthy. Spain, to be sure, robbed the colony of her wealth, but with independence prosperity would come. Accordingly, a loan was floated in London in 1823 at a ruinous discount of 50 percent, which the country could well stand, but the year before it was necessary to confiscate the property of the Philippine missions and to decree the sale of the realty of the Inquisition in order to cover the deficit in the budget. These confiscations were perhaps justifiable. The Inquisition had been suppressed and there was no reason why Mexico, no longer part of the Spanish Empire, should support the missions in the Philippines, but granting their justification, such expropriations tended to create a precedent and brought out at the same time the economic issue: a wealthy Church in a bankrupt state.

In the field of politics too, the conflict was inchoate. The creoles, untrained and inexperienced for public life, having been barred from office by the Spanish government, adopted soon a form of government for which there was no sociological or psychological basis. The Spanish bureaucracy was, of course, recalled when the colony became independent and the infant republic was left to start life anew with but two organizations, the Church and the army, for the ideological institutions planned for the country broke down completely not long after independence was attained. Presently, there followed a series of kaleidoscopic revolts and counter-revolts in which the army bayonets voted the candidates into office and out. A new polity now arose, the Cloudcuckoocity of Aristophanes's "Birds," a place of ethereal abstractions and clouds, with a new system of political theory: a ruthless philosophy of force, which Mexico has not quite outgrown. With such philosophy any dispute between Church and state would doubtless be expressed and settled in terms of violence.

The confiscations of Church property continued after 1822 and as they did, they were more and more bitterly resented by Church and people alike. The state, therefore, realized the need of justifying its conduct and educating public opinion so that future confiscations would no longer meet with popular outcry. Accordingly, a learned political philosopher, Doctor Mora, at the instance of the Governor of Zacatecas, expounded to finality the principle involved. The Church, being a mystic body, could not possess worldly goods. As a civil association, however, she might hold and administer property, but her right to do so being merely civil, she was subject in this respect to the civil law, that is, to whatever provisions the sovereign should dictate as to the tenure of such property. The Church was still

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greatly respected and Doctor Mora was not lacking in reverence or wisdom. He distinguished between the Church and the "clergy"—a distinction still made by Mexican statesmen, whose quarrel has never been with the Church—and laid down the proposition that the seizure of property of the clergy was "possible, just" and beneficial "for the welfare of the masses." Subsequently, Doctor Mora proved, conclusively, we are told, that the principles, training and constitution of the clergy were diametrically opposed to a representative, progressive government. Such was to be the philosophy of the Progressives (later Liberals), at bottom: Bentham's utilitarianism, somewhat distorted (as European thought has always been in Spanish America), coupled with regalistic absolutism. In Latin America, we reverse Mark Twain. We call something an elephant, not because it looks like an elephant, but because it does not. Tory-liberals, anticlerical Catholics, state-rights Federalists are common. How is this phenomenon explained? Is it the provincial, colonial mind accepting on faith whatever comes from abroad regardless of resulting inconsistencies or is it the reflection of the primitive mind? In Mexico, and in parts of Spanish America, the European stock is surrounded by the Indian races so that we cannot but come into contact with the primitive mentality. Now, the primitive man believes rather than thinks. Hence his inconsistencies are quite consistent with his mind.

The educational campaign of the state, to be sure, took other forms. Between 1823 and 1856 not less than twenty circulars were issued by the government urging the clergy not to discuss politics from the pulpit, for the expropriations of property of the clergy were solely political events. To denounce them or to comment upon them was clearly mixing in politics. Therefore it was quite proper in 1834 to expell the Bishop of Puebla and a number of foreign-born priests for denouncing in indiscreet terms the confiscations of the year. Nor were the methods of the government merely negative, as we may infer from a letter, doubtless not the only one of its kind, advising the Liberal governor of Guanajuato that, in order to create the proper atmosphere for the Lerdo Act of 1856, the treasury would appropriate six or eight hundred pesos "so that two young fellows, like Ayala and Gasco or some others, should write . . . popularizing the law and sustaining it for three or four months."

Let us now recapitulate. The friction between the state and the Church or "the clergy," to use the official Mexican term, had grown steadily since independence was attained, but at first it was due to economic necessity. The confiscations, therefore, were incidental and desultory. From 1833, however, the attacks upon the Church form part of a general scheme; the issues become more sharply defined and the conflict grows in intensity as it passes into a new stage. In October of that year the Progressive (Liberal) Congress, in accordance with its principles, sought to assert on the one hand the government's right of appointment to ecclesiastical office, the right of patronage exercised by the Spanish crown in colonial times by virtue of its absolutism. On the other hand, the Progressives secularized education, although the church schools were doing the only valuable educational work in the republic, and abolished civil action for the collection of the tithes despite the fact that the Roman Catholic religion was still the established church under the constitution.

In point of fact, the tithes, with other forms of revenue, had been shrinking steadily. Before independence was attained they amounted to 10,691,300 pesos for all parishes during the four-year period 1806-1810 as compared with 5,211,628 pesos for 1829-1833 under the republic. The action of the Progressives meant practically the disestablishment of the Church and since it legalized (unconstitutionally) a condition already developing in fact, it may be said that thereafter the Church came to be supported less and less by the tithes and more and more by voluntary contributions.

The same year, 1833, the Progressives met to discuss ways and means of covering the national deficit. The only possibility, a new property tax, was unfeasible, for property being mostly in the clutches of the "dead hand," sales were infrequent. Hence values were very low, nor would it be easy to find buyers for the latifundia of the clergy. Statistics, or rather figures, were compiled and an equitable plan was drawn (but for certain reasons not carried out then) to break up the latifundia and nationalize the property of the clergy so as to cancel the public debt and solve other financial difficulties of the nation without detriment to the clergy.

The burden of the American war, years later, fell solely, of course, upon the clergy, some of whose property was to be mortgaged or sold so as to raise 15,000,000 pesos. The moral and patriotic duty of the Church was unquestionable to be sure, but still there was opposition to the levy. Riots followed and armed raids by the state on the religious establishment. The reactionaries finally repealed the decree, but the incident proved to the Progessives that the interests of the clergy were contrary to those of the nation. The clergy had been guilty of treason!

Meantime reform had been evolving. In 1856 the Liberals, successors to the Progressives, enacted the Lerdo Act, a mildly confiscatory statute sponsored by Minister Lerdo, which prohibited civil and religious corporations from holding real estate that was not used for their immediate purpose. It also provided for the sale of such lands on easy terms, the proceeds to be given to the former owners. According to its preamble, the law would create new enterprises and sources of revenue and numberless small interests that would become identified with a progressive government; it would be a great impulse to business and industry. In short, it was no longer a question of reorganizing the public finances, as in 1833, but of bringing about prosperity for the whole country by this simple measure.

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The Lerdo Act was opposed by the Church, and it was actually a failure as far as creating small estates, but to Don Quixote actuality was but a mental stimulus, not a basis of action. The statute, therefore, was modified and incorporated into the Liberal constitution of 1857, which provided for freedom of worship, among other provisions, and was probably not more vitiated by fraud than any other Mexican constitution. The Conservatives objected to the charter. They saw in it a violation of the oft-repeated pledges of the fathers of independence to uphold Catholicism as the sole religion of the land. They resorted to arms. The Liberals seized the opportunity. To break down the power of the Conservatives who, they thought, were being aided by the Church and to raise funds for their war chest, the Liberal President, Juárez, now took action. With the unanimous approval of his Cabinet, functioning—constitutionally—as a legislative body and exterritorially from Vera Cruz for the rest of the country, which he did not control, the great Liberal statesman enacted the famous Reform Laws, the first of which was the statute of June 12, 1859. What statesmanship, what wisdom! The laws, as the national schools teach us, are instinct with the Indian leader's towering personality, admirably reflected in his motto: "Respect for the rights of others is peace!"

The statute of June 12 confiscated, without compensation, all the real estate of the Church, except that used for her immediate purposes; it directed that all mortgage credits of the clergy should be paid into the treasury and abolished religious orders with confiscation of all their real and most of their personal property. Other enactments secularized public education and declared marriage a civil contract, subject to the civil law, thus bastardizing those whose parents had been married by the Church only. No text-book of Mexican history has ever questioned the constitutionality of the Reform Laws, and hence one must conclude that they were constitutional, although under the American system, which is also Mexico's, they would be held unconstitutional as involving the delegation of the legislative power to the executive.

The American State Department had sided all along, of course, with the Liberals, champions of liberty and equality, even to the extent of having an American vessel capture the Conservative flotilla as it was about to take Vera Cruz, the seat of the Liberal government. To counteract such influence, the Conservatives allied themselves with Napoleon III and to safeguard what they considered the foundation of society, the Church, they made Maximilian emperor, convinced as they were the republic had been a failure in Mexico; but the monarchy collapsed and the Conservatives, unsuccessful patriots and hence traitors, disappeared forever from the political arena. The religious question was settled.

I do not mean to hold the human element of the Church blameless during the controversy. Doubtless the Church mixed in politics, but if she actually did, what other means did she have of protecting her rights? Taking the whole situation into consideration —the philosophical, political and especially the economic aspects—the greatest statesmanship and the most ethical conduct of the clergy would hardly have changed the course of events. With whom does the responsibility ultimately rest, with the states or the Church? Let us admit that the Church, rather than individual Catholics, mixed in politics as much and as often as the Liberals and the official text-books would have us believe. I shall hold no brief for the Church. Let the facts speak for themselves.

What were some of the effects of the Reform? The property of the clergy was dissipated by the politicians; hundreds of educational and charitable institutions were destroyed as a concomitant or an incident; agriculture lost the money lent by the Church at a very moderate rate of interest; the law declaring marriage a civil contract defrauded numberless people whose parents died intestate, of their rightful inheritances; the Lerdo Act, as incorporated in the constitution, destroyed the communal holdings of the Indians, thus making them landless and establishing the agrarian question on a firm basis. On the other hand, a number of people obtained bargains in clergy property, and predatory Benthamism became established as the custom of the constitution, to be invoked since, time and again, whenever the politicians have seen fit to do so.

Nine years after the fall of Maximilian, in 1876, and partly as a reaction against the Tory-Liberals of the Juárez and Lerdo stamp, Díaz came into power through the constitutional coup. He was sensible enough to realize that the Reform Laws did not represent the will of the people and much too astute to try to enforce them. The laws became a dead letter, at least some of them, and were thus repealed by custom under our system of jurisprudence, however it may be under American law. But despite Díaz's policy of moderation, a cross current was flowing. After the fall of the monarchy in 1867, the Liberals became the sole masters of the country. The Conservatives had been routed; the church schools, suppressed. There was no Conservative public opinion. The public school system was now used by the Liberals to rationalize whatever they had done. Moreover, a strange change had been brought about in the *mores,* for the primitive mind of the people had combined the concept of the invading French army, which they disliked, the Conservatives and the Church, into a complex of hatred and treason. Patriotism was a love-hatred whose symbol was the Liberals, who had routed the invaders, Juárez, the Reform Laws. Hence Liberal shibboleths must be respected. Although he grew more and more conservative, Díaz did not dare repeal the Reform Laws, and the national schools continued teaching Liberal patriotism. The clergy was represented as a reactionary force, unprogressive and unpatriotic, the ally of the plutocrat and the traitor. Juárez and the Reform Laws were extolled to the skies. So, for example, my text-book of civics (by E. A. Chávez) ex-

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plained why religious corporations should not own any real estate. For, "being devoted to higher purposes, they could not administer said real estate properly." The Reform Laws, so called because they came to reform society, had actually spiritualized the Church!

A period of prosperity and national unification with an active public school system, the Díaz's régime was thus the gestation of an anti-Church nationalism which was to be reflected during the revolutionary period that began in 1910. Unlike the leaders of the Liberals, creoles for the most part educated in the church schools, the radicals of this century were to be rather half-breeds, educated or rather instructed in the national schools. Is it at all remarkable that the struggle this time should be more bitter than last century's? Or that General Calles, an elementary school teacher and a product of the national schools, should be the implacable enemy of the Church? The so-called Mexican Revolution was a reaction against Díaz's dictatorship. Hence the revolutionists connected the dictatorship with Díaz's church policy. History had repeated itself. Again it was the clergy that had allied itself with the plutocrats and the reactionaries. The great Reform Laws had been flouted. Hence the need of a new constitution. The old charter of 1857, theoretically in force, provided for amendment by a two-thirds vote of Congress subject to ratification by the state legislatures. The procedure was dangerous. A convention was accordingly held, excluding all reactionaries to the third generation and a new constitution was promulgated in 1917, reënacting the Reform Laws with a vengeance. The "institutions known as churches" must have no legal personality whatever; primary education, even if private, must be lay; all clergymen must register with the authorities; no educational or charitable institution must be administered by the clergy; the legislatures were to decide arbitrarily the number of clergy within the states; episcopal residences, parish houses, church buildings, asylums or schools of religious associations became the property of the nation, which would determine what churches might remain open and would use all other buildings for public purposes without compensation, of course.

Again history repeated itself. The provisions of the constitution of 1917, like the Reform Laws, were unenforceable. Riots and boycotts followed and finally the authorities adopted a policy of toleration, thus allowing the anti-Church provisions to be repealed by custom under our legal system.

Nine years later they were to be reënacted by the patriotism of the elementary national schools incarnate in General Calles. At first there was an attempt to create a national Church, engineered, according to the *Osservatore Romano,* by President Calles. When the schism failed, the enactments of the executive followed, by virtue of what constitutional provision? Of Article 49, which provides, "nor shall the legislative power be vested in one individual"?

Religion, or rather Catholicism, for to this time of writing Protestant church property has not been confiscated, was soon placed in a legal position similar to that of liquor in the United States. The whole equilibrium of society had been upset. Each decree became more drastic than the previous one, and the economic boycott and the religious revolt of the Catholics were precipitated—expressions of the official language of force that the state will not soon forget.

The persecution ceased last year, but matters stand very much the same. The state met the issue by avoiding it. Priests must register with the authorities, but the hierarchy is to decide who should. The settlement of the last year is but a makeshift. No property, not even the halls of the Knights of Columbus, has been returned to the Church. General Calles's ukases remain on the statute books ready to be invoked by a possible Liberal in the future. There is a finer *esprit de corps* among the clergy today and a better sense of organization among Catholics than last century, as well as closer communications with the outside world, which will bring the weight of international public opinion to bear upon the question, as they have already done. But an ultimate settlement is still distant. For, as the Church takes up the work of reconstruction and as Catholic opinion develops, thousands of teachers throughout the land will continue preaching the gospel of anti-Catholic patriotism—mostly to primitive-minded children in the most impressionable years of their lives.

The Catholic Church in Mexico today does not want privilege. She insists on separation of Church and state and freedom of worship for all creeds with no greater rights than any denomination enjoys in the United States. Hence Catholics and non-Catholics alike have still an opportunity, and a duty, to do something in Mexico, for the issue is not only the right of Catholics, but the right of liberty of conscience—the quintessential right of man.

April Flurry

This tardy April blast
Is winter's final thrust;
It cannot master
Or halt invincible spring,
But only bluster
And scatter and drive
Out of a cloudy hive
A swarm benign.

White bees,
Without hum, without sting,
Drift through boughs of pine.

Directionless they rove,
And unintentioned, these—
Freed
Of any
Flowery greed,
Incurious of honey.

MELVILLE CANE.

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CATHOLICISM OR DISILLUSION

By GERALD B. PHELAN

AMERICAN philosophers have at last succumbed to the lure of the symposium. England and Germany have both had their philosophical symposiasts. (How could Ronald Knox have overlooked them?) But the Frenchmen have not yet lost their sense of humor. The most recent victims, the professors of philosophy in the United States, thirty-two in number, have solemnly written their respective professions of faith in a two-volume collection of essays published in 1930 by the Macmillan Company and entitled "Contemporary American Philosophy."

If you are curious to know what trends of thought prevail among present-day philosophers in this country, and you have neither the time nor the inclination to read the many technical works published within the last ten years, this symposium is just what you require to satisfy your curiosity. Of course, you must not expect to find here what Catholic philosophers think. Their philosophy, being perennial, is not peculiarly contemporary and, being Catholic, is not exclusively American. On the other hand, considering that the study of Catholic philosophy is actually pursued by some thousands of American young men and women who are taught by several hundred American professors of philosophy, considering also that millions of American citizens are profoundly influenced in their daily lives by the content of that philosophy, there does not seem to be any cogent reason why it should not have a prominent place in an honest survey of contemporary American thought. But aside from this neglect of a vital philosophical current in America (a neglect which is more sharply marked by an occasional contemptuous or disparaging reference to it), careful analysis of these thirty-four essays reveals little that is strictly contemporary, less that is in any special sense American, and much that is not philosophy at all.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from a study of these thirty-four essays is that there exists today no single distinctive tendency in philosophical speculation which can be regarded as characteristically American. The only uniform direction discernible in the general movement of American thought—if we judge by this thoroughly representative symposium—is a predominantly negative one. Without exception the contributors evince a disinclination to ally themselves with an uncompromising idealism of either the Berkleyan or the Hegelian type. For some, Professors Lovejoy, Sellars and Boodin, for example, this amounts to a vehement repudiation; while for others, like Professors Wenley, Parker and even Mary Whiton Calkins, it savors rather of attenuation and reinterpretation than of cruel abandonment. The reasons brought forward to justify the change of attitude toward the idealistic explanation of the universe, so prevalent when Professor Palmer was a young man, vary in proportion to the measure in which the individual writers oppose that trend of thought. The radical realists have arguments enough, if they are as valid as they are vigorous, to send idealism to the bottom of the river of oblivion. Less empirical thinkers still cling to fragments of the wreckage and look on with deep regret while the good ship sinks beneath the flood of scientific criticism. The chief difficulties in the way of acceptance of the idealistic outlook seem to be, first, its alleged *a priori* interpretation of experience and, secondly, the apparently inevitable outcome of its method of approach, namely subjectivism of more or less exclusive character. Professor Armstrong devotes several pages of his essay to an explanation for the failure of idealism, while Miss Calkins offers clever rejoinders to the arguments adduced by its opponents and squirms to escape from the dilemma by reasserting her well-known theory of absolutistic personalism. This is the nearest approach to traditional idealism in the whole symposium, unless perhaps Hartley Burr Alexander's unusually charming though obscure literary contribution can bear interpretation in the spirit of Friedrich von Schelling.

Pragmatism, which was once thought to contain the germs of a thoroughly American philosophy, plays a less prominent part in contemporary thought than its vogue in the recent past would lead one to expect. Professor Boodin goes so far as to toll its death-knell: "Pragmatism is not dead," he says, "no one seems to want it now." But this is an exaggeration. None of the writers in this collection expressly champions the pragmatic cause. Yet there are few in whose essays its influence cannot be detected. No one can question the powerful impetus which pragmatism gave to John Dewey's thought. Yet he, among all his colleagues, is acknowledged as a leader in contemporary philosophy. Only two photographs are reproduced in these two volumes. One, representing the living link with the past, is that of the almost nonagenerian Professor G. H. Palmer; the other is that of John Dewey, the recognized representative of advanced thinking in America. If he has passed "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," as the title of his essay indicates and its contents show, the pragamatism of William James must be reckoned among the strongest factors in the process of that change. Several other contributors explicitly acknowledge their indebtedness to pragmatic views. One might quote such men as George P. Adams, Clarence Irving Lewis and A. C. Armstrong who, among many others, pay tribute to the influence of William James. Perhaps "the evolutionary conception of human knowledge which underlay his views," as Professor Theodore de Laguna puts it, accounts in a measure for the persistence of pragmatism as an influence even after it has vanished as a system.

The materialistic bias which colored so much of the philosophico-scientific thought of the middle nineteenth century in Europe never obtained a firm grip upon philosophers in this country. This may have been due to the rigid Puritanism of the days when "in most colleges the little philosophy attempted was usually taught by the president, a minister," as Professor Palmer relates. Since those days, the indictment of "scientism," notably by Bergson, Bontroux and Blondel, has stigmatized materialism in philosophy with the brand of unrespectability, and it has gone out of fashion even in the Old World. Today its vogue is practically restricted to the out-and-out behavioristic psychologists. There is not one thoroughgoing materialist of the gross and grimy type among the contributors to this symposium. Some however come quite close to it, as may be seen from these statements of Roy Wood Sellars: "the brain and its organic setting of muscle and gland *is* mind"; "physical systems are for me ultimate"; consciousness must be "conceived as a qualitative web of events intrinsic to the operations of the brain-mind." But even Professor Sellars would resent and does actually repudiate "naive materialism." He looks for the coming of some "new form of materialism capable of including mental activity and human motivation." To fill just such a need William Pepperell Montague writes his "Confessions of an Animistic Materialist." However, the ordinary philosopher of average intelligence would probably find it hard to follow such proposals as the following: "If material particles can be thought of (following Clifford) as the permanent four-dimensional departures from the three-dimensional surface of the ether on which they float, then the associated vital and psychical systems of potential energy, registering the actual past and so foreshadowing the probable future of the bodies with which they are

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connected, can be conceived as the temporary and more tenuous four-dimensional extensions (or durations) that are the invisible appendages of their visible matrices." Professor Montague appears to regard this as a fundamental principle for the solution of the problems of cosmology. Whether Professor Sellars will be satisfied that it fulfils the requirements of his desiderated "new form of materialism," it is impossible to say. At all events it does not sound like "naive materialism."

Excepting extreme types of subjective idealism, of pragmatism and of materialism, there seems to be no variety of philosophical thought which may not claim to be both contemporary and American. If a term must be found to describe present-day philosophy in America as a whole, none would appear to answer the purpose better than the designation "eclectic." It is probably against this fragmentary character of American philosophy that Professor John Elof Boodin so violently reacts when he says that "present philosophy is a whitened sepulcher calcimined with a coating of science and mathematics, but within are the dead bones of the past and the ghosts walk abroad." In milder language it is the philosophy of professors who know a great deal about what philosophers have thought and written and who strive and struggle to build their own edifice of thought from the ruins of the past. The stones do not always fit together as they should. Gaps and holes are left even in the foundations. The result is a rather patchwork superstructure raised upon a very unstable base. Professor Harold Chapman Brown's comment is restrained but significant: "An academic character and a lack of vitality may be noted in much contemporary American philosophy." Professor Boodin proposes a remedy for this situation, but it is so drastic that the good gentleman himself dares not hope to see it adopted. "It might be well," he says, "for academic philosophers to take a holiday and go into retirement. . . . But as the chief end of academic philosophy is to furnish a living for professors of philosophy, such a renunciation is scarcely to be hoped for."

There is something reminiscent of Socrates and old Athens in these words. Should Douglas Woodruff ever invite the snub-nosed sage to pay a return visit to America, one feels sure that Professor Boodin could introduce him to a few reincarnations of his old adversaries, Thrasymachus, Parmenides, Protagoras and the rest, who taught wisdom for pay.

In spite of the exaggerated vehemence of Professor Boodin's denunciation of the stale and sterile thinking of the academic philosophers of our day and geenration, his estimate is more plausibly supported by the evidence of this symposium than is that of Professor Ralph Barton Perry. This writer contends that what "is most characteristic of the present moment in philosophy is a confluence of currents which have hitherto run in separate channels." The most one can do with a statement like this is to assent to it in a negative fashion; that is to say, contemporary currents do not run in such divergent channels as they might were they to follow the opposite directions of subjective idealism and materialistic mechanism. What Professor Perry goes on to say is doubtless true; "A contemplative observer of the times would have great difficulty in describing its characteristic philosophical activity in terms of the doctrinal cleavages that were so well marked in the opening of the century." But the reason for this is to be found not in a "confluence of currents" but rather in the bewildering confusion of contending viewpoints which aims to embrace in some broad synthetic whole what once were clearly recognized as contradictory doctrines. The result is a tangle, and it would appear that intellectual growth and development or philosophical progress had come to mean a more and more inextricable entanglement.

This deplorable situation might be illustrated in many ways from the pages of the symposium. Suffice it to quote a few samples of the divergent and confused opinions which (one must charitably think) even Professor Perry could scarcely regard as confluent currents. "The universe," says Mary Whiton Calkins, "is through and through mental in character, all that is real is ultimately mental, and accordingly personal, in nature." "Any conception of personality which we can form," says Morris R. Cohen, "is necessarily based upon such infinitisimal knowledge of the unimaginable whole wherein we move, that it seems to me blind arrogance to be confident of the personalistic explanation." Here is another sample: "Meanings and values are integral to existence and reality," says George P. Adams, and DeWitt H. Parker corroborates this view by the categorical statement that "value and existence are always correlative." But Walter G. Elliot dissents. He uncompromisingly asserts that "between positive value and reality we cannot establish an equation." Similar divergencies of thought are patently discernible in the various discussions on the nature of mind, the value of science, the rôle of morality. It would not be difficult further to illustrate the conflicting and often unintelligible views expressed in this symposium, from those sections of their essays in which the authors endeavor to expound their respective conceptions of religion—almost invariably a religion without God. But what has been said suffices to show that "a confluence of currents" is certainly not the most striking characteristic of contemporary American philosophy.

Whether the current philosophy of an age reflects the temper of the times; whether it forecasts the culture of the immediate future; whether it results from the accumulated influences of a previous period; or whether, as is most probably the case, it is at once and in a certain measure, the resultant of the past, the reflection of the present and a presage of the future, contemporary philosophical thought bears a very close resemblance to the popular mental, moral and religious outlook of the present day. There are certain assumptions in this philosophy which are likewise current in the literature of the age and the cultivated paganism of contemporary society. They are not explicitly set down in just so many words, but they are more than implicit in this symposium as well as in almost all the philosophical essays, articles, monographs and treatises which emanate from the great secular universities of America. The great majority of professors of philosophy in these institutions are agreed that:

1. The aim of philosophy is to present and discuss interpretations of the world, thought and life; to seek but not to discover truth.
2. Every intelligent theory or system of thought is interesting as a contribution to the general discussion of the problems of philosophy: none can carry final conviction or truth.
3. Every philosopher must forge his own philosophy and permit no authority, divine or human, to direct or control his thought.
4. Any system that invokes principles of explanation which transcend the temporal universe is unphilosophical.
5. There is no reality beyond the world of human experience.
6. God is either non-existent, or He is the universe or He is immanent in the universe.
7. The world was never created.
8. Philosophy is a way of life, a guide, the only guide, of human thought and conduct: religion is philosophy viewed from this standpoint.
9. Religion is not a matter of the intelligence and will, but belongs to the realm of feeling and emotion.
10. Religion is possible without the conviction that it implies a relation to a personal God.
11. Personal immortality is philosophically indefensible.
12. Moral conduct is essentially social and bears no relation to a personal God.
13. Scientific progress may destroy the validity of philosophical principles and therefore philosophy must be periodically reconstructed upon new foundations.

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These are some of the dogmas of contemporary American philosophy. Chapter and verse might be quoted from the symposium to substantiate each of them. Even a cursory reading of these thirty-four essays could not fail to leave the conviction that, with few exceptions, the contributors are quite orthodox in their respective professions of faith. One item of the creed is indeed stressed by one more conspicuously than by another. That is how you may distinguish, for example, a temporalistic realist from a problematic realist, a meliorist from a liberalist, a naturalist from an animistic materialist, a humanist from an instrumentalist—all of which are descriptive designations applied to themselves by the professors who write in this collection. However, these differences are of no importance, for Professor de Laguna assures his readers that "the distinction between truth and falsity is at bottom an illusion." If what George Santayana says in his brilliant essay is correct—"thought is controlled and consistent madness"—control and consistency alone are lacking to give full status as authentic thought to many of the views expressed in this symposium. No one will question the consistency of Mr. Santayana's own madness for he tells us: "I saw the alternative between Catholicism and complete disillusion; but I was never afraid of disillusion and I have chosen it."

In spite of the madness of his choice, Mr. Santayana's vision of the possible alternatives was far more true than his colleagues in the chairs of philosophy throughout the land would willingly concede. We are fast approaching the parting of the ways. Faith is not philosophy. But where faith is lost, philosophy grows infidel. It is not a question of sincerity. One may be quite sincere and quite wrong. It would be not only unkind but also unfair to question the sincerity of these men's efforts to solve their mental and moral problems. Nothing could be more obviously sincere than the frankness with which so many of them acknowledge the doubts and haunting fears, the hesitations and misgivings they have experienced and still feel in making up their minds on the great problems of life.

Such intimate autobiographical details make the life-stories of these philosophers most interesting reading. They review with admirable openness the influences, situations, persons and circumstances which brought them to the study and pursuit of philosophy as their life's work. Almost invariably the first step was a dissatisfaction with their early religious beliefs and practices. Professor Cohen, for instance, speaks of "the rejection, in my youth, of the whole supernatural world-view." But, unlike Santayana, who saw and chose the path of darkness, the others hoped to emancipate their minds from a narrow or puritanical outlook which cramped thought, killed beauty and made man's life inhuman. Scepticism and doubt brought them no peace of mind, for not a few of these essays end upon a note of wistful yearning. To Professor Wilbur M. Urban is given the clearest realization of the object of that yearning. "I find myself," he says, "akin to those who found it possible to live with comfort in the great systems in which *philosophia perennis* has continually expressed itself. These systems are in a sense houses (man-made houses, if you will) in which men dwell. Even so, I for one am content to dwell in such a house for I am sure that in some way which I cannot quite express, back of it, or in it, is 'a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

If the Calvinistic tradition, the most intelligent of all the currents which flowed away from the central stream of Christian thought, has led or forced so many gifted minds into a morass of vagaries and inconsistencies, no hope is left for saneness in philosophy save through a reversal of Santayana's choice and a return to the fountain of everlasting waters from which Augustine and Aquinas drank.

COMMUNICATIONS

AMERICA'S FIRST ITALIAN OPERA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: With many of your readers I am sure I share a great pleasure in the contribution of Lorna Gill, "America's First Italian Opera," given in THE COMMONWEAL for February 25. With them I long believed that New York and Dominick Lynch were intimately linked to that "first Italian opera." In fact, I have written and published considerable to that effect. But, alas and alack, in the recent past, along came one of those disagreeable persons, a critical historian, who disputed the giving of this musical honor to New York, and offers evidence, hard to disprove, that it belongs to New Orleans, Louisiana. He gives facts and figures to show that there were regular opera performances at the French Theatre, in New Orleans, as early as 1803, and, in regard to New York's first effort, "The Barber of Seville," November 25, 1825, he has dug up this advertisement from the files of the current local weekly, the *Louisiana Courier*:

ORLEANS THEATRE
On Thursday, February 12, 1824
(For the benefit of Mr. Aime)
A First Representation of the Season of the Revival of
The Barber of Seville
Opera in Four Acts by Rossini
To Be Followed by
The Caliph of Bagdad
Opera in One Act, Music by Boieldieu

To rub in his iconoclastic assault on New York's operatic prestige, this disturber of placid tradition also draws attention to the fact that this was a revival of "The Barber," not any "first" as it was in New York, and thereby indicating that there had been previous performances.

Be all this as it may, it remains without contradiction that New York owes its first Italian opera season to Dominick Lynch, and that, on the sure and solid foundation his generosity and good taste thus set down 106 years ago, has since been reared the capitol of the operatic world. He has never been given proper recognition for what he thus did for culture in New York, and more specially by those to whom he is nearest allied. How many of the present generation of Irish-American or Catholic New Yorkers could tell you about him?

Woodlawn, the suburban residence of the Lynch family, and where Dominick Lynch, senior, died in June, 1825, was a fine old colonial mansion at Classon Point, Westchester County, New York. It passed out of the possession of the family many years ago, and, within the last decade, was torn down by speculators for the site of an apartment. Mrs. Lewis Gouverneur Morris, who is Dominick Lynch's great-great granddaughter, when the wreckers began their work, went there and rescued much of the beautiful wood fittings with which the chief rooms were decorated. She still has them.

Some time ago she suggested that, under the auspices of interested Catholics, a room in the new Museum of the City of New York, on Fifth Avenue, the regulations of which provide for such arrangements, should be taken for a repository for Catholic New York relics and historical data and souvenirs. For this she herself would give the interior decorations of the old Lynch mansion as an appropriate setting. So far nothing has been done to further this very attractive suggestion. His Eminence, Cardinal Hayes, Justice Victor J. Dowling, Kenneth O'Brien, John G. Agar, Henry Anderson, E. H. Floyd-

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Jones, S. N. Warren, T. J. O'Reilly, Mrs. Morris and her husband, with other well-known New Yorkers, have been active in the work that brought about the erection of the new museum on Fifth Avenue. Mrs. Morris's suggestion could easily be given a practical and successful result if the many Catholics who now could do so would give the material endorsement required by the museum's regulations for such a special use of part of the building.

THOMAS F. MEEHAN.

LITURGICAL PROBLEMS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Mr. Cuthbert Wright's article, nominally on "Liturgical Problems" but actually on Father Finn and the Paulist Choristers, is so largely eulogistic and so politely phrased that one hesitates to find any fault with it. But I cannot refrain from remarking that beneath the surface of Mr. Wright's compliments there lies a subtle arrogance. The assumption runs throughout the article that an Anglican layman is a better interpreter of the letter and the spirit of a papal document on music than an "infinitely talented" Catholic priest.

Perhaps Mr. Wright forgets—perhaps many of his readers are not aware—that Father Finn's work has received the approbation of three Popes, and that Pius X, the author of the "Motu Proprio," conferred upon Father Finn the same title of distinction that he had bestowed upon Don Perosi. The Popes seem to think the work of the Paulist Choristers orthodox enough. For years it has been observed that some Anglicans count themselves more Catholic than the Catholics. Have we arrived at the time when Anglicans are more papal than the Pope?

Furthermore, when an Anglican criticizes a Catholic for disloyalty to a rubric or to the liturgy of the Church, one is reminded of Christ's rebuke to the Pharisees, who "tithed mint and anise and cummin" and neglected "the weightier things of the law." To manifest a pious regard for a papal "Motu Proprio" on music while disregarding an incomparably "weightier thing," the papal encyclical on Anglican orders, is to assimilate oneself perilously with those who were the *bête noire* of our Saviour. When will these Anglicans come to understand that the essence of the Catholic religion is not in vestments, ceremonial, music and art, but in faith and charity and union with the Catholic Church? Mr. Wright asks the antithetical question: "Will the clergy never comprehend that an unmutilated liturgy and liturgical music play a far more important part in conversion than they seem to imagine?" Would he have us understand that it is our liturgical ineptitudes that have retarded his conversion? Anglicans of the school of Cuthbert Wright may think themselves already in the Catholic Church and that therefore they need no conversion. But the Pope disagrees with them, the Catholic Church repudiates their theory, and even their own church refuses to call itself Catholic. To haggle about liturgical music while remaining without the fold is to be overconcerned with "mint and anise and cummin."

While I am at this little job of righting Mr. Wright, perhaps I had better refer to his criticism of our Sunday night service at St. Paul's. He is pleased to call it "a sacred concert broken by a sermon or a literary lecture." There are no "literary lectures" in the pulpit of the Paulist Church. Occasionally there is criticism of a book, but always in view of its bearing on faith or morals, not its literary value. Invariably the opportunity is seized to ram home the necessity of a divine authority, the One True Church. Mr. Wright seems not to have heard, or heeded, that part of the "literary lecture."

At any rate, a nicer sense of propriety (presumably an Anglican characteristic) would have led him to reflect that the advisability of a certain kind of service in a Catholic Church is to be determined not by casual visitors of another faith but by the pastor and the ordinary of the diocese. If a type of service or of sermon satisfies these authorities, and if furthermore it attracts multitudes of delighted people, perhaps more good is being done for Christ's kingdom on earth than if an austere service of plainsong, delightful to Mr. Cuthbert Wright and other dilettanti, but caviar to the general, were permitted to effect a sort of *religio depopulata.*

To return to Father Finn: A quarter of a century ago he dedicated his superb talent—his genius—to God and the Church, and for all that length of time he has labored with unflagging zeal, and with extraordinary success. It is therefore amazing and painful to his friends that a Catholic paper should permit sniping at him from outside the pale.

REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P.

WAR OR PEACE?

Onamia, Minn.

TO the Editor: In the issue of March 4 under the heading of "War or Peace?" the author makes some few statements which I wish to comment upon.

That France does not wish a new war is evident because she has nothing to gain and all to lose; but this is no proof of her unselfish appreciation of peace, being as such the greatest good of the state and of the world, or of her whole-hearted coöperation given to peace as such.

The writer shows himself extremely prejudiced, because he takes for granted that the war guilt of Germany and her allies is proved beyond doubt.

In the various discussions over the "war guilt," it is clear to the impartial observer that the sole war guilt of neither one of the fighting parties is proved, but the partial guilt of both is apparent either in bringing about or not preventing that war. Now then, moral theology teaches that not victory but unjust damnification gives right to compensation. Therefore, the partial guilt of both parties being proved, we now see that the Treaty of Versailles was never justified: Germany and her allies have no moral obligation to fulfil the points of the treaty, and France and her allies have no moral right to require its execution. Both parties have a moral obligation to make a new peace treaty, that should prescribe reparation of all apparent injustice done to each other before, during, or after the war, and that should be made in a spirit of reconciliation to bring about a lasting peace. Self-preservation, of necessity, prescribes such a course, and no "congress strong enough to dictate to Europe" is necessary, nor can it do any good. If France, however, remains insistent on the fulfilment of the Treaty of Versailles, she acts against justice, and if such an action would lead to a new war, the war guilt would be established beyond all doubt, and France would in justice be obliged to pay the damages done whether she would win or lose.

It appears to me that the Reverend Ernest Dimnet cannot judge the situation fairly, because he is of French nationality, hence deeply interested.

The article "War or Peace?" interests me, not because I am interested in Germany or France (my own country remained neutral during the World War), but because I am interested in world peace, which is only possible if based on Christian principles.

REV. JOHN C. BLOMMESTEIN, O. S.C.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Miracle at Verdun

IT IS easy enough to say that "Miracle at Verdun," the play on war and peace, death and resurrection, ideals and disillusion which Hans Chlumberg wrote just before his death, sprawls all over a combined stage and screen without creating any other deep impression than gruesomeness. It is also easy to say that many of its scenes are interminable. Yet the fact remains that if Eugene O'Neill or Bernard Shaw had written it, much would have been forgiven. The real trouble with this play lies deeper than its experimental combination of sound screen and stage, and deeper than its loose-jointed dramatic construction. The trouble is in the color and emphasis and direction given to the theme itself by the author—in the attitude it presents toward the meaning and purpose of life and death.

No matter what intellectual attitude one may maintain toward these fundamentals, no matter how one may be armed with cynicism or materialism, and even if one considers death as mere dissolution and life as nothing more than progressive decay, the fact remains that a play of life and death, if it would aspire to becoming drama, must be rich with the simpler poetry of folk-lore and with the basic yearnings of millions toward immortality, and that the author must let the poet in him conquer the cynical philosopher. In matters of this sort, it is not enough to say that the underlying philosophy of a play does not accord with one's own, and to attribute its failure to that fact. One must try to establish the fact that if the play has a narrow and limited philosophy, it fails by that very fact to attain universal significance. The Greek tragedies furnish an obvious example. No one today believes in Greek mythology. But as poetic concepts of life, death and immortality, they have the universal significance of natural religion. The same is true of the Nordic myths upon which the Wagnerian music dramas are based. When I say that Chlumberg has ruined a good basic idea by his treatment of it, I mean not only that I personally disagree with his treatment, but also that in and of itself this treatment is narrow, uninspired and utterly impoverished through lack of any deep poetic feeling and sense of universal drama. The play is a treatise rather than drama, an angry explosion against things which deserve anger but are not bettered by explosions, particularly of the trite and uninspired kind. In brief, the war dead, whom Chlumberg summons from their graves to see what has happened to the world for which they died, are merely animated corpses—never immortal spirits.

Consider for a minute the basic idea—that by a miracle (which the author thins out in the end to the tiny proportions of the conventional stage "dream") the 30,000,000 war dead are brought back from their graves. Do they find the world any better for their sacrifice? Does the world really want them to come back? Suppose one goes a step further with the author and admits fully that the war was a ghastly futility, that new wars are already in the making, that politicians are still governing the affairs of men, that the very homes which have mourned the dead have become so adjusted to other ways that the dead would be actually unwelcome. Widows have remarried, impoverished homes can only feed the living mouths, a world suffering from unemployment does not know what to do with 30,000,000 more men. These rather brutal facts, which are the only things Chlumberg can envision, do not of themselves make up the matter of a great play. The whole question rests with the resurrected dead themselves. They form the collective hero of the drama. What do they do when they once more wander through a world that no longer needs nor wants them?

Only true poets can grasp the meaning of a hero, and Chlumberg definitely proves that he is not a poet. His dead merely wander back, discouraged and disheartened, to their graves. The ending which might have justified the play, and which certainly would have lent it some sweep and grandeur and immense poetic irony, is one that someone else suggested to me, and which I pass on for what it is worth—namely, that the immortal dead should return to their graves in triumph, well quit of a world of shackles and tears and strife, and more than ready to let their poor battered bodies rest until a final resurrection at the death of the world itself. O'Neill, with all his faults, is a poet who would have caught such an idea as this and translated it into magnificent drama. It is the essence of that fine moment in his "Great God Brown" when the dying man cries out that the tears of men water the earth, only to rise again to become the eternal laughter of heaven. What more terrific comment could the mind of a poet devise than the glorious laughter of the dead at their knowledge of the release they have won from the valley of tears—a laughter mixed with compassion, and a pity as immense as eternity?

But Chlumberg has missed all this. His dead are merely men who have slept a long time in cold misery beneath the ground, who come forth from their graves as mud-smeared corpses, bringing horror and revlusion wherever they go. They see the pitiful stupidity of men. By implication they see that Communism is man's only salvation. They hear the prelates and statesmen debate (only that what they see and hear are Voltairean parodies) and then, like so many blocks of animated clay, turn their backs upon the world that no longer wants them.

I have long maintained—and hope to continue maintaining—that more plays die through lack of real poetry than through any other cause, including even imperfect playwriting and poor production. Even when the poetic expression is crude, an idea that reaches back to the poetry inherent in all folk-lore is bound to have vitality and richness. For this reason I am much more concerned with the Theatre Guild's failure to detect the poetic poverty of the Chlumberg play than with any details of the production, which, on the whole, I found quite extraordinary. Yet many of the criticisms leveled against the play have laid great stress on the mistaken effort at blending screen and stage and on a certain clumsiness in the technical aspects of the playwriting itself. These are the merest incidentals compared to the underlying fault of handling a stupendous idea with the imagination of a cactus.

A great deal might be said in very just praise of the technical efforts the Guild has made in production. "Spread Eagle" was, I believe, the first play to combine screen and stage. But the Guild has attempted something much more ambitious, what with the use of sound film, a triple synchronized screen and many other novelties. On the whole, the experiment was well worth making (in behalf of a better play!) and I have very little doubt that on this semi-failure someone, possibly the Guild itself, will soon build a perfected technique which will greatly expand the compass and dramatic possibilities of the stage. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

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The House Beautiful

NO GREATER contrast in the theatre could be found, perhaps, than "Miracle at Verdun" and Channing Pollock's latest play, "The House Beautiful." Yet, at the risk of being laughed to scorn by every sophisticated theatre-goer in New York, I am glad to go on record as finding vastly more of the true stuff of drama in Mr. Pollock's boldly sentimental and romantic little play of human failures than in all the long length of Herr Chlumberg's ambitious corpse-parade. The point is that Mr. Pollock has had the audacity to stick to very simple, very obvious and very homely things, but to things which also have in them all the essence of folk-lore poetry and which are, if for no other reason, universal.

"The House Beautiful" tells the major part of the life story of Archie and Jennifer Davis—the kind of couple who would be the first to plank down an instalment on a new real estate development in New Jersey, and who would become in time the most respectable, the least prosperous and the most heavily debt-burdened couple in the community. In other words, Mr. Pollock is describing the outward circumstances of millions of American couples. But that in itself is not the point of the play. Mr. Pollock has also set out to discover just what such a couple might find in the drab details of their life to give it richness and beauty and supreme contentment. To this end he has made Jennifer a romantic dreamer, one who sees in her meek and flat-chested and high-minded husband nothing less glorious than a knight in armor, going forth daily to do battle for his home and those he loves. Mr. Pollock even goes so far as to have "inset" scenes in which he shows us Jennifer's dreams. Romanticism as frank and unashamed as this demands a lot of courage in these cynical days, but Mr. Pollock has not only courage but firm convictions as well, and in spite of a few preachy lines and many banal ones, he manages through sheer force and enthusiasm and sympathy for his characters to set the whole play on a far higher level than one would suppose from any second-hand account.

There is no question, I think, that "The House Beautiful" will be a successful play. Its disarming simplicity and consistency and its genuine warmth of feeling guarantee that. Even some of Broadway's most brittle critics admit as much. What annoys them chiefly are the occasional stretches of hackneyed lines and copy-book philosophy. What they fail to see in this prim and artificial age is the difference between banality that rests on firm foundations—that is, on the ideas of folk-lore—and the banality of many cheap modern philosophers. I admit that in many instances Mr. Pollock could have dispensed with preaching to good advantage, letting the action of the play speak for itself, but I admire him intensely for defending the universality of simple truths against the fads of the day.

What the manuscript of the play lacks in distinction, however, is more than counterbalanced by extraordinarily fine acting and a swift-moving and sensitive production. The play has an amazingly fine tempo, carrying one through the years in swift and sure measure. James Bell as the husband has immortalized the semi-failure who finds inner peace. Mary Phillips, after several seasons of playing the toughest types of womanhood, has returned to the kind of warm dignity she displayed so well in "The Wisdom Tooth." Both Mr. Bill and Miss Philips accomplish the difficult transitions of advancing age with exceeding grace and dignity. If you are willing to take your pleasures simply, you will find few plays more honest and humanly moving than "The House Beautiful." (At the Apollo Theatre.)

BOOKS

A Scholar's Controversy

Chateaubriand and Virgil, by Louis Hastings Naylor. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. $1.25.

"THIS study," Professor Naylor tells us, "was presented as a doctoral dissertation at the Johns Hopkins University in 1923" and is now published for "the bimillesimal anniversary year of Virgil's birth." The author styles the work "a modest contribution to the history of ideas since in it the author tries to present the concept of Virgil in France between 1790 and 1830." As far as Chateaubriand's works are concerned, the author has diligently gathered up and elaborately indexed every allusion to Virgil perhaps to be found in Chateaubriand. But the references and treatment of a few other writers is so incidental and scant that the writer can hardly be said to have accomplished his purpose unless "modest" be generously stressed.

There are five main chapters: I, Virgil in the life of Chateaubriand; II, Chateaubriand as a critic of Virgil; and the other chapters treat of borrowings from Virgil in five of Chateaubriand's works. Criticisms of Chateaubriand by others are quoted and their comprehensive views serve to show by contrast the lack of a fine, constructive criticism in the writer of the dissertation. He is not profound, not illuminating and not fair. Perhaps a future Doctor Philosophiae need not have all these qualities. Their absence, however, is painfully evident, especially when French critics are cited at length.

The unfairnes, or let us say the carrying spirit, is most of all shown in ascribing to Chateaubriand a method of authorship which it is highly improbable he could ever have followed. Professor Naylor would seem to think that Chateaubriand had Virgil spread out before him when composing and that he picked out here and there and made, not even a cento but rather a crazy-quilt, of snips and shreds of the Latin poet. Professor Naylor describes Chateaubriand as "gathering promiscuously," indulging in "wholesale methods of imitation," "in a mosaic distorted," in "interweaving and confusing his memories," in taking "complete liberties with his classical sources," in "clever attempts to camouflage his sources," in "queer combinations." The fallacy of all this is to imagine Chateaubriand taking various topics directly from Virgil, when rather they were taken from his own store of impressions and adopted to his new purpose, where there is no confusion, no promiscuity, no camouflaging. Professor Naylor puts up a straw man and then tears his own taxidermy to pieces.

Here is an example: Chateaubriand compares the combat of two warriors to the fight of two stallions over a mare. In conventional language used from Homer down the centuries, Chateaubriand calls the stallions, "sons of the wind," and the mare, "the daughter of Aeolus." Professor Naylor traces this comparison to the "Georgics," III, 220, where two bulls fight over a heifer. Another passage ten lines farther on describes a rider of a stallion who is unable to hold in his steed when it scents the dam, and then fifteen lines further Virgil describes the "madness of mares." "Here, then," says Professor Naylor, "are the three elements of the mosaic. It is of no consequence to the author of "Les Natchez" to construct a narrative of the relentless struggle of two steeds out of an account of the fight of bulls; to attribute to these infuriated chargers the characteristics of young horses in their first heat of passion; and, last but quite as distorted, the gentle Zephyr, the south wind of the amorous touch, becomes the stern and ferocious Aeolus, ruler and warder of the winds." To say nothing of the doubt-

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ful statement about young horses, which is inept in any case, because Chateaubriand says nothing about the age of his horses nor does Virgil, can we be expected to believe Chateaubriand must take from the fight of bulls, the fight of horses and, if he does, is it necessarily distortion? To suppose that Chateaubriand was thinking of the legend of the "wind-impregnated mares," is demanding too much of credulity, and even if he did, there is no contradiction; Aeolus is king and father of Zephyr, and so all steeds are his children. Except for the fact that two horses fight in one case and two bulls in the other, there is scarcely another single detail alike in Chateaubriand and Virgil. In fact, the more Professor Naylor tries to show Virgil and Chateaubriand to be alike, the more he shows their difference. The elaborately descriptive style of Chateaubriand is as unlike the severe narrative style of Virgil as an Oriental empress in jewelled tiara and in fold on fold of heavily embroidered robes is unlike the Amazon of legend with the scanty garb of the figures on the frieze of the Parthenon.

Professor Naylor is unfair also to Chateaubriand as a critic. Chateaubriand, he says "was often altogether misled." "The most striking error" seems to be what the professor calls "a complete misunderstanding on Chateaubriand's part in respect to figures of rhetoric employed by Virgil. These negative expressions are not in any way indicative of any particular state of mind in the author. They are nothing but a figure of speech: litotes." First, it is a broad conclusion to say that Chateaubriand has a complete misunderstanding of all Virgil's figures of rhetoric, even if he did not understand litotes. Secondly, Chateaubriand's argument for Virgil's melancholy is not drawn from negative particles above but from negative objects, *objets negatifs*: "the silence of night, shades of the wood, solitude of mountains, quiet of tombs, memories of the past." Thirdly, Professor Naylor seems to have a misunderstanding of litotes, and besides, litotes has nothing to do with the question. "Non vultus, non color unus," says Chateaubriand, "peignent excellemment le trouble de la prophétesse," and they do. Chateaubriand argues from the troubled countenance. Professor Naylor says he has examined a considerable number of sentences containing "an emphatic *non*," as though that constituted litotes. The negative is essential to litotes, as commonly understood, but the emphasis is on the positive part of the litotes. Negation has three meanings, two literal and one figurative. When the negative denotes the same as the positive as in obverse iteration, "black, not white," when the negative denotes less than the positive, "five, not ten," the negative has in both these cases its literal meaning, no matter how vehemently it may be emphasized. When, however, the negative is used to increase the positive, then there is litotes, and this is shown by emphasizing the positive, not the negative: "He is not superlatively white; he is not a pale lily; he is not unshaded; not just out of the bath." These are instances of litotes, and when Virgil says, *non ignara mali,* he means that she was very much acquainted with evil. Finally, litotes can express either joy or sorrow and his nothing to do with the melancholy of Virgil's poems, nor did Chateaubriand so argue. This is another straw man, not very skilfully put together by Professor Naylor.

"Students in Catholic schools and *collèges* in France learned their Virgil from the carefully expurgated edition *ad usum Delphini.*" Professor Naylor is wrong in stating that the Delphine edition was expurgated. *In medias res,* not *in mediis rebus,* is the consecrated phrase, and it is rather odd to fancy with Professor Naylor that Chateaubriand took this device of narration, as old as the "Odyssey," from Milton. What are we

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NEXT WEEK

Speaking at the University of California, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler said recently, "Finance has passed from a national basis to one which is international, and shortly it will become evident to all that the Bank for International Settlements at Basel is a guiding and constructive force in shaping the monetary affairs of the whole world." Exactly how this is so, and how it has developed, is told in THE WORLD BANK, by Gerhard Hirschfeld. While the League of Nations is struggling with international politics and the world is undergoing a period of great financial disturbance, this reveals that constructive effort is being made to attain a sort of federal government of finance. . . . MEN MARKED FOR DEATH, by Dr. Leonid I. Strakhovsky, is an ominous recital of how the Soviet secret service dispenses with the formalities of international law and the processes of extradition to carry out political vengeance on its own citizens who have sought to flee from its tyranny. . . . EASTERTIDE IN ROME, by Marie Zoë Mercier, is a delightful description of the varieties and beauties possible where the spirit is free to express itself without fear of police interference or gross abuse—the joy of souls whose Lord has risen from the dead. . . . PROGRESSIVE POLITICS, by William C. Murphy, jr., is a clear report of the recent bi-partisan Progressive Conference with suggestions of its larger implications. This is of great importance for an understanding of contemporary affairs and probable developments. . . . OF DOGMA, by Reverend Paul Bussard, is a dialogue between Pierrot and Columbine and a gentleman who, having a small part of a great truth in his mind, thought it could not be anywhere else.

to think of Professor Naylor when he tries to find a parallel between Indians shooting at a squirrel, and the followers of Aeneas shooting at a dove, and when he goes on to say: "It is scarcely necessary to add that the Trojans did not attach a squirrel to a bamboo-lanyard, but a dove, which was not considered a symbol of life among the ancients. This detail comes probably from the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist." That is surely a mystifying assertion! Are we to think that Virgil's dove came from the New Testament, and why should Chateaubriand be sneered at for having a squirrel instead of a dove, if his Indians had such a mark and held the squirrel as a symbol of life?

Professor Naylor's parallels are often insignificant and far-fetched, and even where they are evident and admitted by Chateaubriand, the details of Chateaubriand are so vastly different that the dissertation rather proves the opposite to what it claims to prove: "Chateaubriand is a continuator and imitator of Virgil." One might as well claim Ossian as an imitator of Virgil, and Chateaubriand, though Virgilian, in some features, is in the larger aspects of the style of his novels Ossian and Celtic and romantic, not classical and Roman.

FRANCIS P. DONNELLY.

For Women Only

Lucy Stone, Pioneer of Woman's Rights, by Alice Stone Blackwell. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $3.00.

IF MISS BLACKWELL'S life of her mother, Lucy Stone, is heavy to hold—after the fashion of American books which need a derrick to hoist them—it is light, and easy, and pleasant to read. The pioneer workers for equal suffrage (woman's rights they preferred to call it) had a hard fight and many discouragements; but there is not a shadow of doubt that they enjoyed the struggle. They never, indeed, experienced the delirious delight of the English militants (that rapture so well described in "Fanny's First Play"); but what they lost in felicity they gained in self-respect, a possession more highly esteemed in that day than in this.

We see Lucy Stone in these memoirs as a very happy woman. If she worked nine years to earn enough money to take her to Oberlin College, she made good when she got there. If she graduated in a black bombazine frock, the work of her own hands, which cost $4.66, she nevertheless managed to look just what she was—a self-assured young gentlewoman. If she suffered many reproaches for her reprehensible habit of speaking at public meetings, she had the satisfaction of knowing that she spoke uncommonly well, a point reluctantly conceded by her adversaries. If she was expelled from the West Brockfield church, other folds were open to her. Even the bloomers which she wore for four years were rather becoming to her neat and slender little figure; whereas poor Susan B. Anthony, who really loved handsome clothes, suffered agonies from their too manifest unfitness.

The strongest proof of Lucy Stone's capacity for enjoyment is that she actually got a kick out of keeping her maiden name after marriage, which seems to the unprejudiced mind a flat and foolish thing to do. It created in those innocent days a little flurry of excitement, a wonderful and enviable commotion. Lawyers and hard-headed men of affairs said that it made a needless complication in even the simplest business transactions; but a group of women became enthusiastic supporters of the movement, and a great many arguments ensued. The only person who appears to have been indifferent on the subject was Mr. Blackwell. The matter seemed to him of no especial im-

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portance. He was a man of strong principles and kind disposition; but not always astute. The home in Orange was made over to his wife; and while he was traveling in the West she permitted part of her household goods to be sold in default of taxes which she refused—because she had no vote—to pay. Happily they were bought in by a neighbor, and restored, so that she was none the poorer in possessions, and much the richer in reputation. Things had a way of turning out right for her.

In their fervent abolitionism husband and wife were in deep accord, and here, at least, they saw the fulfilment of their hopes. The emancipation of the slaves was in their eyes the greatest of moral victories, the Fifteenth Amendment an act of common justice. But the four years of Civil War, the hard and heroic struggle which made possible the emancipation, and which saved the states from disruption, are dismissed by Miss Blackwell in a short contemptuous paragraph:

"The war was a sad time for Mrs. Stone, as for thousands of others. Its whole atmosphere of bloodshed and political corruption was alien to her, and intensified her sense of the wrong of shutting women out from the franchise. She said the government could take any mother's son away to be shot, 'and afterwards put its bloody hand in her pocket to help pay the bills.'"

And that was all that Lincoln, and Lee, and the 600,000 men who fought and died for the cause they believed in, and for the land they loved, meant to Lucy Stone.

AGNES REPPLIER.

Conquistadors of Souls

Dominicans in Early Florida, by the Reverend V. F. O'Daniel, O.P. New York: United States Catholic Historical Society.

THE ARCHIVIST and official historian of Saint Joseph's Province of Dominicans in the United States has written the tragic but inspiring story of his order's part in the attempted conquest by the Spanish of what is now the Southeastern part of the United States. His carefully documented account covers the events of practically a century, that is from 1510 to 1606. The tale is unfolded through the biographical sketches of the seventeen Dominican Fathers, six lay brothers and one bishop who either actually ministered for a time in the vast area known as Florida, or who made heroic attempts to conquer for Christ's kingdom the souls of the aborigines. By his scholarly research Father O'Daniel has suggested a great field for further study, and revealed a mine of romance not only for the writers of history but for fictionists with a flair for adventure.

We glean many interesting facts from these sketches. For instance, Father Anthony de Montesinos, one of the first four Dominicans to come from Spain to convert the Florida Indians, on the first expedition said Mass at Guandape (later Jamestown), and there erected a chapel, which "is one of the initial points, if not even the initial point, in the history of the Catholic Church of the United States." We read with delight of the rhythmic catechism set to music by Father Louis Cancer in his effort to convert the Indians of Tuzulutlan, and of how "they sat motionless and enraptured by the musical story of man's origin, redemption and final destiny." In the zeal of Father Cancer and of Father Peter Martin for the liturgy in their missionary labors, and their success with it as a means of instruction in the Faith, we see a shining example, and a challenge in this day of liturgical revival. We discover that one of these early missionaries to Florida, Father Dominic de Salazar, became the first Bishop of the Philippines. And that Bishop John de las Cazezas y Altimamirano was the first bishop to visit

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and exercise his episcopal powers in the United States. These are just a few of the facts one regrets are not more widely known.

But while the facts in themselves are interesting, they serve only to reveal the sterling characters of those Dominicans who so dauntlessly fought and died for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the aborigines. The viceroy of New Spain wrote Philip II of the men chosen for the expeditions: "They are men chosen because of their tried lives, letters and doctrine, and of an age to be able to work among the Indians and learn their language." Most of the others mentioned in the four expeditions about which the biographies revolve were trained at St. Stephen's, Salamanca. All of them were molded in the spirit of Saint Dominic. They had an ardent zeal for souls, were eloquent, learned and holy, and were preëminently defenders and protectors of the natural rights of the Indians against the tyrannical oppression of the conquistadors.

All one can say further is that here is material for not only one but several tales fully as beautiful and much more thrilling than "Death Comes for the Archbishop." Father O'Daniel hopes others will follow the trail he has so studiously opened in these biographies. They move one to urge for all of these Dominicans what Father Louis Dutto wrote of the martyrs of Tampa: "Father Diego de Tolosa, Brother Fuentes and Father Louis Cancer died martyrs to their zeal. Will not someone, whose voice is loud enough interest himself in their canonization?"

VINCENT C. DONOVAN.

An Outline of Spanish History

Spain: Its Story Briefly Told, by Catherine Moran. Boston: The Stratford Company. $2.50.

MR. CHESTERTON in his introduction to this book makes the point that an outline should really be in line; that is, it should in the case of history show events related to each other in an intelligible order. It should not be a jumble of impressions, prejudices and fashionable fancies. Happily, Miss Moran avoids all this and offers a well-knit, coherent outline of the key periods in the long history of Spain. Though pitched to the development of high school students, it may be taken up with respect by those who have passed that age but are unacquainted with Spain and wish to repair that lack. The simple, clear style is attractive, and it is enlivened by various entertaining quotations from contemporary accounts which afford picturesque details of customs and sympathetic insight into characters. The author is undoubtedly more *simpatica* to some periods than to others. This must account for the genial summaries of Henry IV of Castile, Charles III and Aranda, Charles IV and Godoy. There is a tinge of the English school of historians in the description of institutions.

In general the author achieves a detachment proper to an outline. Where she has attempted criticism, she throws into correct relief the Visigothic kingdom and the expulsion of the Moors. Her succinct treatment of the rambling aims of nineteenth-century political parties is a feat. On the other hand, the Moorish culture is described out of focus by not calling attention to the background of the Hispano-Roman culture already in southern Spain and to the Byzantine borrowings of the Moors themselves. The impression is rather given that the constructive result of the Roman influence was the legal code, whereas it was the administrative scheme and the *municipia.* The code was too profoundly transformed by Christian philosophical principles to be any longer recognizable as Roman.

A few old tags have crept in: (1) the legend of "the Jews as a hardworking, cultivated and enlightened people." This

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gives no idea of the issues involved in their expulsion. (2) "They [the Spaniards] set about the repression of the natives [the Indians] with such severity that they practically exterminated the race." (3) The position of the king's confessor at court is surprisingly explained from a letter of a Venetian ambassador, who knew little enough about it. (4) The story of Queen Isabella's pawning her jewels for Columbus is repeated.

The weakest chapter of the book is the last, not as some smart American critics have assumed out of their own notions, because it favors the monarchy and ignores the strength of the republican movement, but because it gives no inkling whatsoever to the alignment of principles which produced the situation of the dictatorship.

All compressed outlines, however, run the risk of telling too much by telling too little. This one is no exception, but what the reader will do well to carry away from this book, is a picture of a people, strong and cultivated, whose talent for learning and art never faltered and whose dignity survived luxury as well as misfortune. With this in mind, he may then turn to another picture of Spain, wherein appears her genius for religion and civilization. This greater Spain overflows all bounds of outlines.

MARIE R. MADDEN.

Popular Aesthetics

The Road to Culture, by Charles Gray Shaw. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company. $2.00.

DR. SHAW'S might seem to be a splendid but folorn hope. He believes that we are confronted by an age of sophistication rather than one of culture because of an increasing anarchy in taste. It has become the fashion to declare assertively, "I like what I like," and find in this assertion excuse for mental and aesthetic laziness. Pointing out that high art, like higher mathematics, requires an application of time and interest to be mastered and yield its secrets and its enjoyment, Dr. Shaw observes that the mental anarchy of the merely smart leaves them pitifully starved and puny when the cover of their arrogance is snatched from them. In short, the road to culture, like the road to salvation, is hard and narrow. Yet he hopes to lead many along the road to culture.

What saves his hope from a forbiddingness that would make few converts, is the same paradox that saves the Catholic faith from the astringencies that seem eventually to destroy the life of faith in the Protestant sects. He shows that the athleticisms of the intellect needed to compass the heights of culture, the self-denials in a sense, are more than compensated for by the gains. By constraining one's energies and traveling the narrow road of organized knowledge and classic literature, in other words by assimilating the fundamentals of art, the common denominators of human understanding and mutuality of interest, lo, the height is attained—and here what breadth of view, embracing the cultures of mankind; and what perspective, calm and ordered vistas wherein the parts are in some proportion, rather than nightmarish confusion and instability! Urbanely he demonstrates not mere authoritarian objections to cheap music, bad books and shoddy art; no puritanical, "Thou shalt not"; but a vision of the life of culture as a brilliant possibility, as the life of the spirit is no mere spite of the flesh but the entrance to beatific vision. His book is not for the few who are already advanced in aesthetics, but for the many who would like to be. To these it may be a guide and inspiration, and in proportion as it is for the many, it may do much good.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

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Briefer Mention

N by E, by Rockwell Kent. New York: Brewer and Warren, Incorporated. $3.50.

THIS is in many ways a thrilling book. At first the author, both in his writings and his pictures which adorn nearly every page, may seem so highly mannered that one may be a bit grudging of his merits. But these are real. In his writing he exhibits very keen observation of long days and night at sea in a small boat, the details of struggling with wind and water to make a course, and the growl and phantom appearance of rocks and a dangerous shore out of fog. As well as words can, he tells of the bleak appearance of the Labrador and Greenland coast, and of the strangely puny yet heroic appearance of human life and buildings there. His drawings, like his words, have a strength and simplicity that suit his subjects. He is thoroughly pagan, and only rarely neopagan in his deliberate offensiveness to the sacredness of the name of the deity and the morality of those who have developed since the old, primitive paganism. The shipwreck of the Direction—as the boat was fatefully named—impends like a tragic destiny throughout the narrative, and when the crash finally comes, it is bravely told. The subsequent adventures among the Danish men of Greenland and the Eskimos, is fascinating and colorful and in no sense an anti-climax.

Festival, by Struthers Burt. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

DORN GRIFFITHS in search of "a key to life" is unhappily too indefinite a character to sustain the length of Mr. Burt's latest novel. At fifty Dorn retired from a successful banking career, and "Festival" is the Odyssey of his wanderings among theories and philosophies. The author is astute enough to leave his hero mildly content with a chub though fishing for trout. At the same time, consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Burt balks any examination of faith or religion, so that "Festival," because of that omission, is incomplete. Anyone having read his "The Other Side"—incidentally, a very fine book which merited wider reading—would see at a glance that some of the unused material of that book had been thrown into the new novel. In consequence, the plot being very slim is frequently forgotten in the excitement of running down speculations about racial characteristics, Americans and what is wrong with them, and what the modern world is coming to. Mr. Burt always writes smoothly and entertainingly, however, and for those who like epigrams "Festival" provides a feast.

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